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Chief Executives Board for Coordination

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# Conclusions of the High-level Committee on Management at its twenty-ninth session

**(UNESCO headquarters, Paris, 19 and 20 March 2015)**

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# I. Introduction

1. The High-level Committee on Management of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) held its twenty-ninth session at the headquarters of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Paris, on 19 and 20 March 2015. The meeting was chaired by the Director General of UNESCO, Irina Bokova. The Vice-Chair was the Deputy Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, Jan Beagle.

2. In her opening remarks, the Chair recalled that 2015 marked the seventieth anniversaries of the founding of both UNESCO and the United Nations. It would also be a turning point for the international community, requiring the organizations of the United Nations system to adapt to provide efficient and coordinated support to Member States in the transition to the post-2015 development agenda. She stressed that the United Nations system must rise to meet high expectations and continue to advance efforts to ensure that it was more fit for purpose.

3. She highlighted the relevance of the Committee's mandate to promote and coordinate system-wide management reforms to shape a more innovative, agile and results-oriented United Nations system. Noting the significance of issues such as governance and the evolution of institutional structures, she urged the Committee to consider bold changes across its mandate and not to shy away from crucial areas such as institutional alignment with the post-2015 development agenda and the provision of financial resources throughout the system to align promise with performance.

4. Guided by the overarching principles of transparency, accountability, cost-effectiveness and results orientation, the Committee's strategic plan for the period 2013-2016 provided a clear road map for the Committee with a focus on the redesign of operational and management functions. She underscored the need to work hand in hand with the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) to ensure coherence from the global level to the country level.

5. She expressed thanks to the Director General of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), Francis Gurry, for having chaired the Committee for the past two years.

# II. Adoption of the agenda

6. The agenda as adopted by the Committee is reflected in the table of contents.

7. The complete list of participants is provided in annex I.

8. The checklist of documents is provided in annex II. All documents relating to the session are available from www.unsceb.org/content/hlcm/march-2015.

## III. Review of the implementation of the High-level Committee on Management strategic plan 2013-2016 and follow-up to the post-2015 "Fit-for-purpose" discussion of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination

9. The Committee began an internal assessment of its own fitness for purpose early in 2013, with a process of reflection and analysis that culminated in the development of its strategic plan for the period 2013-2016. When the strategic plan was approved, the Committee agreed to review and adjust it as necessary in the course of the reference period to reflect emerging management priorities and intergovernmental mandates.

10. At its twenty-eighth session, the Committee discussed its contribution to the CEB post-2015 "Fit-for-purpose" strategy, which was then finalized and submitted to the Board, together with the summary of the Chairs of the joint session of the High-level Committee on Management and the High-level Committee on Programmes, held on 9 October 2014. The strategic plan, with its five strategic priorities, provided a strong basis for the Committee's contribution to that discussion. Following the discussions, the Committee now had an opportunity to review the strategic directions set out in the strategic plan.

11. Introducing the agenda item, the Chair noted that a significant body of work had been completed over the past two years and that the strategic plan was an important tool for system-wide action in the area of operations, ensuring coherence and harmonization at all levels. Its aim was to align operational issues with programmatic needs, given that effective programming required efficient operational support.

12. She said that the Committee should build on the progress already made and accelerate and scale up the successful initiatives undertaken to date. In doing so, the United Nations system needed to be innovative in identifying and scaling up new business solutions, recognizing that it had the ability and responsibility to change the roadblocks most cited as preventing responsiveness.

13. She drew attention to the three areas in which the Committee could make a strategic difference, as identified in the Committee's "Fit-for-purpose" paper. Those areas were people and skills — the international civil service of the future; designing new business models; and strengthening the collective accountability of the United Nations system. Those areas of work were key components of making the United Nations system fit for the new environment.

14. In the ensuing discussion, there was consensus that considerable progress had been achieved towards the objectives set out in the strategic plan. The Committee also agreed on the need to accelerate work, with the aim of completing the key areas of work in the strategic plan by October 2015 in order to ensure that the results would inform the next report of the Secretary-General to the Economic and Social Council on the implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system and the related intergovernmental discussions.

15. The Chair of the UNDG Assistant Secretary-General Group provided a briefing on the decision to conduct the evaluation of the pilot projects on implementing the business operations strategy in May 2015 and on a business

operations strategy retreat to be held in July 2015. The Committee noted the good work of its networks and recommended that they should participate in those processes and play a greater role in the harmonization of business operations at the global level, ensuring that the remaining bottlenecks hampering collaboration in the area of business operations were removed. The networks were requested to prioritize, in close cooperation with UNDG, the removal of any such bottlenecks in 2015, while also remaining informed about the priorities identified by the High-level Committee on Programmes, given that they could have an impact on the future work of the Committee. Several members noted the need to better align UNDG and the Committee and to improve the structure and practices of the two groups, including through results-focused joint meetings or joint task forces.

16. The Committee agreed that the focus should be on completing, with urgency, the work set out in the strategic plan. A clear monitoring matrix should be created so that progress, and areas in which progress was lacking, could be clearly identified. In that respect, it was reiterated that the Committee should not be held back by the lowest common denominator, but should keep pushing for innovative solutions.

17. Members also noted the importance of expanding the leading role of the United Nations system in environmental performance, including by developing multi-stakeholder and multisectoral approaches; increasing focus on headquarters collaboration in procurement, in particular in New York, Copenhagen and Nairobi; drawing on experiences from Geneva and Rome; and strengthening communication, in particular of results.

18. The Committee reaffirmed that, to achieve continued and sustainable progress in the work on harmonized and coordinated operations, there was a strong need for leadership by senior management and recognition of the work performed by their staff in the networks, given that staff members were carrying out their inter-agency duties in addition to their normal work.

19. **The High-level Committee on Management:**

**(a) Noted with appreciation the progress made with regard to the objectives set out in the Committee's strategic plan for the period 2013-2016;**

**(b) Recognized the value of the work undertaken to redesign modern operational and management models to deliver savings, to provide higher-quality services and to promote a culture of working together;**

**(c) Committed itself to accelerating and scaling up the implementation of the strategic plan, in line with the directions provided by CEB to meet the common ambition of the members of the Board to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of United Nations organizations through the use of more adaptive and agile business models;**

**(d) Requested the Committee's networks to work with increased urgency, in conjunction with the UNDG Business Operations Working Group and regional or country offices piloting the business operations strategy, to consider solutions for common operational approaches in any critical business processes in the areas of finance, procurement, human resources and travel, highlighting the degree of feasible and desirable harmonization (full, partial or none), and to present proposals to improve the status and remove any impediments to the Committee for discussion at its next session;**

**(e) Requested the Committee's secretariat to develop a more comprehensive, yet simple, framework to monitor progress towards the goals set out in the strategic plan, with indicators of achievement, presented in an appealing and engaging way;**

**(f) Also requested the Committee's secretariat to ensure that work on the development of the next strategic plan would begin in a timely manner, that it would focus on innovative solutions while being informed by the experiences and progress relating to the strategic plan for the period 2013-2016 and that it would take into consideration complementarity with the workplans of the other pillars of CEB.**

## IV. Review of the draft United Nations system programme of work for a data revolution

20. At its second regular session of 2014, CEB discussed the data revolution and called upon the High-level Committee on Management, the High-level Committee on Programmes and UNDG, in a coordinated effort, to develop a coherent programme of work focusing on carrying forward a data revolution. The Board also agreed that a working group of representatives of UNESCO, the World Bank Group, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the regional commissions and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat should carry out the work and present it to the Board at its first regular session of 2015. The working group prepared a draft programme of work based on the report of the Independent Expert Advisory Group on the Data Revolution for Sustainable Development, entitled "A world that counts: mobilising the data revolution for sustainable development".

21. UNICEF introduced the topic by referring to the workplan drafted by the CEB working group and emphasizing two key messages. First, the data revolution, as a concept articulated in the report entitled "A world that counts", highlighted the fundamental global shifts that were already taking place as a result of new technology and the data generated or enabled thereby. The international system faced a huge challenge in adapting to the new reality. Harnessing the data revolution would help the United Nations system to deliver better results at a lower cost. Second, within the broader framework, there were steps that could be taken immediately — termed "quick wins" — such as the four included in the proposed workplan.

22. The Committee noted that some areas needed further discussion, including standards and principles on such issues as protection, privacy rights, governance and human rights. All could benefit from a common United Nations position on public access to data, leveraging technology, provision of support to Governments and funding/financing, among others.

23. Members noted that mechanisms already existed to coordinate action that the United Nations system could take in that area, including the Statistical Commission and the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities. The former, for example, had just concluded its most recent session, with outcomes that also addressed the data revolution.

24. The Committee agreed that the establishment of strategic partnerships with the public and private sectors was necessary if the United Nations system were to play a successful role in the data revolution. It heard a presentation by the Head of Information and Communications Technology of the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN), Frederic Hemmer, and the Adviser to the Director General of CERN in charge of relations with international organizations, Maurizio Bona, on areas of possible collaboration with and support to the United Nations system in carrying forward a data revolution.

25. The speakers explained that, because CERN was an intergovernmental scientific research organization, data and their supporting infrastructure played an essential role in its work. Globally, its data centre was the fifth largest in the world and its information and communications technology department was recognized as a centre of excellence. Parts of the CERN information and communications technology systems were custom-built and maintained in-house. Innovation was a cultural norm and openness the mainstay; all experimental data were made available to the public. CERN had continuing collaboration with organizations of the United Nations system, including the Operational Satellite Applications Programme, the World Meteorological Organization and WIPO. Its knowledge, expertise and information and communications technology infrastructure had direct relevance to United Nations priorities as they turned towards the data revolution. That infrastructure was a cost-effective means of supporting the delivery of short-term solutions for time-sensitive initiatives. The organization's expertise could be an asset when addressing big data and related information and communications technology challenges, given that many of them had been addressed innovatively, leading to cost savings.

26. In summary, the Committee noted that the United Nations system would soon have to face challenges in terms of technology, cost and time with regard to its implementation of data revolution initiatives. As a strategic partner, CERN could bring innovation, knowledge, capacity and cost-effectiveness to that effort.

27. In the ensuing discussion, participants voiced agreement with and appreciation for the inspiring presentation by CERN and looked forward to working on defining collaboration. It was acknowledged that the data revolution was a concept whose time had come. Members expressed support for the initiatives and appreciation for the work of the CEB working group. The Committee recognized the complex and multifaceted nature of the subject and that the proposed workplan was but the beginning of the process. To maximize synergies and interoperability, it was necessary to rationalize and sequence projects in the broader digital domain.

28. It was recognized that much information currently remained in silos and that the value attached to data revolution initiatives depended upon linkages. Members requested details on resourcing and costing each initiative and on the linkages between them.

29. It was generally understood that, if pursued, initiative three of the draft programme of work for the data revolution would need to be undertaken in a broader, multi-stakeholder forum. Members noted that it was urgent for the organizations of the United Nations system to seize the opportunity to leverage their sources and position themselves as a central source of data for the world at large. The proposed world forum on sustainable development data could also be a major branding opportunity.

30. The Committee postulated that a digital strategy was one that would break down barriers to information, engage stakeholders in each step of the process and facilitate decision-making. Several members underlined the relevance of the data revolution to both development and humanitarian mandates and that the outside world should contribute to benefit directly from and be ensured access to initiatives led by the United Nations system in that area.

31. The Chair recognized the need for a multi-stakeholder approach and emphasized the importance of data disaggregation for evidence-based support to the implementation of the future sustainable development goals at the country level; promoting an agenda that was both people driven and data driven; and capacity-building in the production and management of data. Without disaggregated data and capacity-building, countries would not be in a position to gather, evaluate, monitor and gain value from data.

32. She called for the United Nations organizations to drive that process for the benefit of sustainable development and peace. Post-2015 sustainable development monitoring and evaluation of performance would be more thematically driven rather than project, programme or organization driven. That in turn would require granular, interoperable and comparable data to be shared with Member States. She emphasized that that was an area, seen essentially as a knowledge-management problem, where United Nations system organizations could act as one and contribute to much-needed change.

33. **The High-level Committee on Management:**

(a) **Expressed thanks to the lead agencies for having prepared the draft programme of work for the data revolution (CEB/2015/HLCM-HLCP/1), expressed support for the four initiatives contained therein and suggested further elaboration of the initiatives on the basis of the input received from individual agencies and the CEB pillars, with a particular focus on timelines, responsibilities and resourcing for each initiative;**

(b) **Requested Committee members to nominate a focal point or focal points for each organization to participate in the work and through which specific requests would be channelled;**

(c) **Noted the importance of integrating the call for a data revolution with a more comprehensive digital strategy for the United Nations system;**

(d) **Expressed thanks to CERN for its informative presentation and welcomed its willingness to collaborate with the United Nations system through the relevant inter-agency mechanisms.**

## V. International Civil Service Commission review of the United Nations system compensation package: assessment of the proposals on the table and strategic guidance for their finalization — path towards implementation of the mandatory age of separation at age 65 for current staff

34. The Vice-Chair opened the discussion on the review by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) of the United Nations system compensation package by

highlighting the linkages between the review and the organizational change objectives set out in the strategic plan for the period 2013-2016.

35. The Co-Chair of the Human Resources Network provided an update on the progress of the ICSC review, noting that it was in its final phase. A final meeting of the working group with representatives of agencies, staff associations and ICSC was to be held in May 2015 to discuss transitional measures, the financial scenarios and the overall impact of the new package. The new compensation package was expected to be presented to the General Assembly in 2015 for its consideration and a decision. She noted that some key elements of the proposed package were likely to be finalized during the eightieth session of ICSC, after which the implications for human resources operations and the financial impact would become clearer.

36. She underlined the importance of having appropriate measures in the new package to underpin mobility initiatives currently being implemented in many organizations and to support service in hardship duty stations. She also highlighted that devising adequate solutions to support single parents was essential in a highly mobile work environment and stressed the need to focus on transition management and communication.

37. The Vice-Chair of ICSC provided the Committee with an update on the review from the point of view of the Commission. He said that he was confident that the few outstanding elements in the review that needed to be addressed would be solved before the eighty-first session of the Commission, to be held in Vienna. ICSC was giving due consideration to the issues of acquired rights of staff members and to transitional measures, about which several organizations had raised concerns. It would begin the review of the compensation package for General Service staff and National Professional Officers after finalizing the current review for Professional staff later in the year.

38. Several participants expressed concern in the light of the progress report, recalling that the original intention had been that the ICSC review should result in a modernized and simplified compensation package that supported strategic organizational change. They highlighted that it was important for the new package not to pose obstacles to the introduction of managed or voluntary mobility schemes in organizations and the need to provide adequate incentives for people to serve in the most difficult duty stations. A number of participants, while expressing appreciation for the value of consistent management of core entitlements, reiterated the need for flexible instruments in recruitment, retention and relocation cases that could not be adequately handled within the existing frameworks. Members also discussed the possible need for United Nations system organizations to take coordinated action on elements that were not part of the final package. The Committee requested the Human Resources Network to stress those points with ICSC as the review continued.

39. The Committee noted the potential repercussions that the forthcoming change in the mandatory age of separation to 65 years for existing staff might have on institutional initiatives to achieve gender equality and geographic distribution. The CEB secretariat was requested to gather data on the gender and geographic composition of the population that would be subject to extension to inform the Committee's future deliberations on the subject.

40. Citing the impact on budgetary predictability and workforce and succession planning, several speakers suggested that there was a need to implement a new mandatory age of separation in line with the respective budget cycles of organizations. Many members also highlighted that changes in the mandatory age of separation would in many cases be subject to approval by the relevant governing bodies, which would need to be consulted with regard to possible implementation dates and modalities, as stipulated in the respective staff rules and regulations.

41. **The High-level Committee on Management:**

**(a) Took note of the progress report on the review by ICSC of the United Nations compensation package and expressed appreciation for the work performed by the Human Resources Network;**

**(b) Reaffirmed its full support for and commitment to a compensation system that supported the organizational change agenda set out in the strategic plan for the period 2013-2016 and was informed by the principles outlined in the statement by the Board on the ICSC review, in particular with regard to attracting and retaining talent and strengthening the international expatriate workforce of the United Nations system;**

**(c) Confirmed its support for a compensation system that encouraged mobility of staff in difficult duty stations and supported diversity in the workforce;**

**(d) Emphasized the importance of simplifying business processes in the implementation of the forthcoming new compensation package;**

**(e) Reiterated the importance of including a flexible element in the redesigned package to allow organizations to use their discretion in dealing with exceptional situations where it was difficult to attract and retain competent staff;**

**(f) Took note of the need for adequate transitional measures towards a new compensation package and an appropriate communication strategy that would involve all stakeholders;**

**(g) Requested the ICSC secretariat to coordinate with the CEB secretariat to ensure that all organizations were systematically consulted and that their diverse operational needs were duly and fully reflected in the proposal that would be developed regarding the implementation date of the mandatory age of separation at age 65;**

**(h) Requested the CEB secretariat to review the possible implications of implementing the mandatory age of separation at age 65 on organizations' gender balance and the diversity of their workforce;**

**(i) Requested the Human Resources Network, as the primary interlocutor with staff, to consider the proposal by the Federation of International Civil Servants' Association (FICSA) on cost sharing of its elected officials at its session to be held in July 2015. Subsequent to the review by the Human Resources Network, the Finance and Budget Network should analyse the proposal from the financial perspective. Both would then submit their views for discussion by the Committee at its session to be held in October 2015;**

**(j) Requested the Human Resources Network to gather data from each member organization on resourcing and funding of staff associations and to present its findings to the Committee.**

## VI. Review and adoption of a system-wide road map for United Nations climate neutrality by 2020 and of the related goals towards enhancing the environmental sustainability of United Nations operations

42. In 2007, CEB endorsed the United Nations climate neutrality strategy, which asked United Nations organizations to measure, reduce and ultimately offset greenhouse gas emissions from United Nations facilities and operations.

43. In its strategic plan for the period 2013-2016, the Committee decided that, in considering innovative business models, it would seek to achieve measurable progress to enhance the environmental sustainability of United Nations operations. To do so, it committed itself to developing and implementing environmental sustainability management systems in each organization at a variable speed depending on the readiness of its individual members. The Committee requested the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to continue to coordinate and provide technical support and to report to the Committee on collective achievements and forward planning on behalf of the Environment Management Group.

44. In 2014, the Environment Management Group and UNEP gathered resources in order to be able to provide at least part of the needed support to United Nations organizations in implementing those decisions. A partnership with the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency will allow Committee members to benefit from expertise, capacity-building and tailored assistance for the implementation of environment management systems. The Group and UNEP also obtained funding from the Trust Fund for the Harmonization of Business Practices in the United Nations System for measuring and enhancing the resource efficiency of United Nations facilities and operations.

45. On the occasion of the Climate Summit held in September 2014, the Secretary-General wrote to all Board members and United Nations funds and programmes, stating that he expected the United Nations system to reach full compliance with the climate neutrality strategy and to become effectively climate neutral by 2020 at the latest. He explicitly tasked UNEP and the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change with providing support to agencies in meeting the climate neutrality objectives.

46. The Committee reviewed, with a view to its adoption, the system-wide road map for United Nations climate neutrality by 2020 and the related goals towards enhancing the environmental sustainability of United Nations operations.

47. In introducing the item, the Chair underlined that the Board had endorsed climate neutrality in 2007 and, although there had been significant progress, the pace of change towards achieving that goal needed to increase. She reiterated the importance of partnerships and affirmed that the entire United Nations system needed to stand behind the Secretary-General in emphasizing the objective of climate neutrality and to lead by example.

48. UNEP, as Chair of the Environment Management Group, presented the background and highlights of the action plan, which prescribed ways to attain climate neutrality by 2020. Given that there was no single solution, the plan provided for approaches to measure and report on progress, including the identification of baselines and targets (a component of the plan funded by the Committee's project on the harmonization of business practices), the identification of best practices for financing sustainable measures, the allocation of responsibilities to Group partners and budgetary assessment.

49. As an example of what could be done, and had been done, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations presented its experience, which focused primarily on its facilities but also included a culture change among its staff, which had had an even greater impact on the environment. The importance of culture change was reiterated by several other organizations during the discussion.

50. In the ensuing discussion, participants provided numerous examples of what their organizations had achieved in the past few years in moving towards climate neutrality. Among the initiatives mentioned were improvements of facilities in conjunction with renovations, reductions in travel, use of public-private partnerships, use of solar power, reduced reliance on printing, reductions in emissions from ships and tracking of emissions. The consensus was that, on the basis of those examples, the United Nations system would certainly be able to reach climate neutrality by 2020, or even earlier, and that all the initiatives had a positive effect on the overall efficiency of operations.

51. Carbon offsets were mentioned as a tool that could be used to attain the goal of climate neutrality. It was generally felt, however, that the current low carbon-offset prices represented an "easy way" to reach climate neutrality; instead, organizations would need to focus on reducing their actual footprint in order to attain the goal.

52. The Committee reiterated its commitment to being closely engaged in the process and agreed to continue to be the body to which the Environment Management Group would report on its monitoring of progress. In that context, the action plan was endorsed unanimously.

53. **The High-level Management Committee:**

**(a) In line with the United Nations climate neutrality strategy endorsed in 2007 and the strategic plan for sustainability management in the United Nations system that was endorsed in 2013:**

**(i) Committed itself to reaching climate neutrality by 2020 through a combination of emission-reduction initiatives and purchase of offsets;**

**(ii) Adopted a United Nations road map towards climate neutrality by 2020;**

**(b) Recognized that, while carbon offsets were an important tool, focus should be placed on reducing the actual carbon footprint of the United Nations system;**

**(c) Agreed, to achieve those system-wide goals, to integrate the objective of "improved environmental sustainability of United Nations operations" into the respective programming of facilities and operations, including designing organization-specific action plans.**

## VII. Enterprise resource planning interoperability study

54. Opening the discussion on the enterprise resource planning interoperability study, the Chair indicated that the study was nearing its conclusion and referred the Committee to the briefing note (CEB/2015/HLCM/5). Noting that the topic was complex and multifaceted, she offered several observations, beginning with a reference to the discussion currently under way to modify the United Nations system compensation package. She pointed out that any changes to the package would almost inevitably entail modifications to the information systems that supported compensation processing for all United Nations organizations. In other words, should the compensation package change, so too would the supporting enterprise resource planning systems, offering an opportunity for agencies to explore enterprise resource planning-related transformations within payroll applications, including optimizing existing systems in a collaborative fashion.

55. The representative of the International Telecommunication Union, as lead agency for the study, introduced the topic. He said that, since the launch of the study in late 2014, the consulting company had conducted many consultations, visited field locations and run a well-attended workshop in order to fully understand the issues and challenges surrounding the topic. During those consultations, the company had arrived at a definition of interoperability as being "two or more agencies interacting at the organizational, information, process or technological level with the goal of efficiency and/or effectiveness". It was important for the Committee to understand that the reference point for the recommendations and business case prepared by the consultants would be based on the cluster of organizations participating in the study and would not necessarily reflect the entire United Nations system.

56. He pointed to the initial observations of the company referred to in the briefing note, noting that many of them revolved around a change in how organizations approached administrative processing. While technology could be an enabler of change, a genuine transformation of administrative services required leadership, enablement and enforcement to truly reap the benefits, not only in terms of the efficiency, but also of the effectiveness of United Nations programmes. He pointed to one of the key preliminary findings: because enterprise resource plans were not designed to be interoperable, to render them interoperable merely for the sake of doing so would only add a layer of additional cost, making savings more difficult. Efficiency was attained by combining the operations of many agencies on a significant scale, thus overcoming the natural barriers of individually implemented enterprise resource planning.

57. Several examples from the private sector were used to illustrate the ways in which those organizations were moving towards transformation. In one example, a large European health technology company had recently consolidated 60 enterprise resource planning systems into one without seeking to make the 60 systems interoperable. In another example, one of the world's largest shipping companies had recently expressed regret that it had not implemented an enterprise resource planning system to manage its more than 90,000 employees, preferring to purchase the administrative activities as a commodity service.

58. The Committee was informed that the enterprise resource planning subgroup of the Information and Communications Technology Network would meet in April

2015 to share experiences and the results of the study would be an important topic of discussion.

59. The representative of UNDP, as a member of the steering committee for the enterprise resource planning study, suggested that a useful way to view the study would be to consider interoperability in the absence of an information system, i.e., whether agencies could "interoperate" on paper and, if they could, the actual information system would not be an obstacle to interoperability at any level. He expressed the view that, when exploring interoperability, it would be useful to consider four aspects of administrative operations: people, processes, systems and reporting. For example, although the staff of all United Nations organizations shared a common civil service with regard to salary scales and entitlements, United Nations staff members actually worked for individual agencies. That distinction indicated that interoperability for "people" could prove challenging, regardless of the enterprise resource planning system in place. He noted that, while progress had occurred in some areas, such as procurement, in other areas, such as audit, there was little or no inter-agency recognition and therefore interoperability was extremely limited. He noted the need for what he termed a "logic of reciprocity" that would take the United Nations system further than harmonization.

60. He further pointed out that enterprise resource planning systems themselves could, to some extent, support agency administrative interoperability. On a broader level, many United Nations entities used the International Aid Transparency Initiative, which imposed standards for publishing data and which could be extended to provide a more standard reporting environment. He also noted the need for the United Nations system to make progress on interoperability as a transformational change, rather than incrementally, and reiterated the important role that Member States played in supporting that type of change, noting that the Committee offered a key platform for facilitating a move towards a more harmonized environment.

61. He also pointed out that, while enterprise resource planning implementations might have generated significant administrative savings and efficiencies, the United Nations system had reached the point at which further savings could be the result only of administrative transformation.

62. The Chair opened the discussion by noting the importance of establishing that interoperability referred not only to the technical aspects of enterprise resource planning systems, but also to interoperability of people, processes and reporting. During the discussion, members explored the relative differences between collaboration and harmonization; whereas the former might be easier to achieve in the short term, the latter would yield greater benefits to the United Nations system over the longer term. Emphasizing the point, members noted an increase in collaboration across organizations, in particular in the area of procurement; however, the overwhelming sentiment was to strive for a greater degree of harmonization.

63. Members also stressed the importance of linking harmonization efforts to individual organizational and system-wide strategies, depending on the outcome of the study. In particular, it was noted that, with rapid advances in technology, many agencies were likely to update enterprise resource planning implementations in the coming years, which would present organizations with opportunities to review existing enterprise resource planning arrangements and be an opportunity to explore more coherent approaches for administrative processes. As an example, members

noted that harmonization efforts had begun to take root within country teams as a result of the implementation of business operations strategies. Those initiatives, while currently limited in scope, would require support at the headquarters level to become more substantial, and the United Nations system should consider ways to support them.

64. The Committee also emphasized some of the key messages contained in the briefing note. For example, members noted that simply linking enterprise resource planning systems would be likely to have the result of increasing the operational costs of enterprise resource planning. Moreover, the United Nations system was already incurring costs associated with the need to aggregate data in order to support decision-making.

65. As the discussion concluded, members noted that, while organizations differed, depending mainly on their mandates, many similarities existed in their administrative processes. A transformational shift that would build on existing harmonization efforts and move the United Nations system towards a more harmonized approach to administrative processes was therefore possible. Furthermore, a transformation around business processes at the global level could have a far greater impact than those carried out at country level, which ultimately could be only incremental. Members also recognized that any change would incur short-term costs that would vary by agency, although eventual savings throughout the entire system could be significant.

66. **The High-level Committee on Management welcomed the update on the activities of the enterprise resource management interoperability study and took note of the preliminary findings as presented in the briefing note.**

## VIII. Review of progress by the High-level Committee on Management strategic group on reconciling the duty of care for United Nations system personnel with the need to "stay and deliver" in high-risk environments

67. The Co-Chair of the strategic group on reconciling the duty of care provided a briefing to the Committee on the progress made, noting that the work of the strategic group had been divided into two phases. In the first, five analytical sub-working groups had been established to analyse five high-risk environments (the Syrian Arab Republic, Haiti, Ebola-affected countries, Afghanistan and Mali/Somalia), with the aim of identifying duty of care issues. In the second, two thematic sub-working groups would be set up to address the issues identified in the first phase and to develop recommendations.

68. The five analytical sub-working groups had begun their data collection. The analysis would include elements such as programme criticality, security risk management, programme budget planning, safety and security of premises and staff awareness and understanding of risks. The sub-working groups had provided the Chair with preliminary findings and would present the results of the data collection and analysis by early April 2015. The final report on the first phase would be provided to the Chair by mid-April.

69. The Committee expressed thanks for the update and emphasized the importance of including locally recruited staff in the scope of the strategic group, in consideration of the fact that local staff were often recruited from regions other than those in which they were stationed, which had implications for their duty of care at the location where they served.

70. **The High-level Committee on Management:**

(a) **Took note of the progress being made by the strategic group and expressed appreciation for its work;**

(b) **Reiterated the organizations' commitment to taking steps to fulfil the duty of care towards all their personnel, in particular when deployed to high-risk environments;**

(c) **Committed itself to continuing to extend support to the strategic group on duty of care.**

## IX. United Nations system occupational health and safety framework

71. At its nineteenth session, in February 2010, the Committee considered a paper presented by the Medical Directors on occupational safety and health policy in the United Nations system and decided to request them to submit a fully developed policy proposal. Subsequent to that decision, the Joint Inspection Unit issued a report with recommendations for implementation of system-wide accountability for occupational safety and health.

72. The draft occupational health and safety framework was presented by the Chair of the Medical Directors Working Group, who noted that the objective of the proposed framework was to keep United Nations system staff fit for purpose and ensure that the United Nations system, as an employer, discharged its duty of care to staff. In implementing the framework, organizations would go through six phases, with a suggested completion date for the final phase of December 2018.

73. Members expressed their support for the proposed framework and emphasized the linkages between the current proposed occupational health and safety framework and the security and risk management strategies and tools.

74. Several organizations noted the diversity of work environments among United Nations agencies, which could have an impact on the proposed implementation of the framework. Concern was also expressed regarding the resources required by organizations to implement the framework.

75. **The High-level Management Committee:**

(a) **Expressed appreciation for the work of the Medical Directors Working Group on the subject;**

(b) **Expressed support for the adoption of the United Nations system occupational health and safety framework;**

(c) **Emphasized the importance of the phased implementation of the framework, taking into account the work environment of each organization;**

(d) **Noted that implementation should proceed taking into consideration linkages with security and risk management;**

(e) **Requested the Medical Directors Working Group, during the first two phases of implementation, to gather data and information regarding the costing and resourcing for the subsequent phases.**

# X. Other matters

## A. Costing of oversight mechanisms

76. **The High-level Management Committee expressed support for the approach proposed by UNFPA to quantify the costs that United Nations organizations incurred to maintain their oversight and accountability structures. It agreed that UNFPA would design a template to capture such costs, for review by the Finance and Budget Network at its session to be held in June 2015. The template would then be converted into a survey that would be conducted by the CEB secretariat. The results of the survey would be jointly analysed by UNFPA and the CEB secretariat and result in a report that should be presented at the next session of the Committee.**

## B. New Inter-Agency Security Management Network policies for endorsement by the High-level Committee on Management

77. **The High-level Committee on Management took note of the new safety and security incident recording system and air travel policies. In the absence of any comments by Committee members, it was agreed that the two new policies would be considered adopted upon endorsement of the report of the Committee by the Board at its session to be held in April 2015.**

## C. International Public Sector Accounting Standards system-wide progress report for the period July-December 2014

78. **The High-level Committee on Management took note with appreciation of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards system-wide progress report for the period July-December 2014.**

## D. Survey on the global service delivery model

79. **The High-level Committee on Management welcomed the stocktaking of United Nations system solutions in the area of service delivery and committed itself to providing to the CEB secretariat any comments and suggestions on the draft template before the launch of the survey, scheduled for 10 April 2015.**

## E. Duty of care in Ebola-affected countries: maintaining the capacity of United Nations clinics

80. The Committee had before it a paper on maintaining the capacity of United Nations clinics (CEB/2015/HLCM/8e and Add.1), which was presented as part of a wider discussion regarding the health-care facilities for United Nations personnel and eligible family members. The paper pointed to the need to discuss the issue specifically in the context of health-care facilities for personnel serving in the countries primarily affected by Ebola (Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone as well as Mali, where there was a need to maintain a level of preparedness). Given the situation in those countries and the need to provide facilities both for personnel who might become infected with Ebola and for non-Ebola-related treatment and care, it had been necessary to urgently upgrade the existing United Nations clinics in the countries concerned. That had been done with funding provided on an exceptional basis by UNDP, with in-kind contributions by the World Food Programme and support by the United Nations Medical Services Division.

81. Before the outbreak, United Nations clinics in the affected countries did not meet the standards set out in the new terms of reference for United Nations clinics that now apply throughout the system. It is envisaged that, after downsizing, the clinics will not revert to their pre-Ebola levels, but will continue in a status that is compliant with the new terms of reference, which ensure a minimum level of acceptable health care for United Nations staff and eligible dependants.

82. The Committee noted the need to devise an appropriate approach to ensure that the capacity and standards of United Nations clinics were maintained and funding streams managed sustainably, in a more comprehensive manner, in the context of a long-term strategy.

83. It was proposed that the discussion on United Nations health facilities should be carried forward by the Medical Directors and the United Nations country teams, in order to establish a global, cost-effective, long-term and systemic approach. As part of that approach, many underlined that the costs relating to ensuring an adequate duty of care for United Nations system staff should be part of the cost of doing business and, therefore, be built into agreements with Member States. In addition, it was requested that the updated terms of reference for the United Nations clinics should be shared with Committee members to improve the understanding of standards.

84. The United Nations Secretariat noted that United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response funding would continue to be available until the Mission was closed down. It was therefore proposed that, until a long-term strategy was in place, the Ebola Response Multi-Partner Trust Fund might be a possible funding source for the maintenance and upgrading of the United Nations clinics in the affected countries.

85. Moving forward, UNDP agreed to pursue the suggestion of financing the current operation and upgrading of United Nations clinics through the Ebola Response Multi-Partner Trust Fund and to revert to the Committee later in 2015 with a more long-term and sustainable approach to the provision of health clinics for United Nations personnel.

86. **The High-level Committee on Management:**

(a) **Requested UNDP to consult the United Nations Secretariat regarding the possibility of using the Ebola Response Multi-Partner Trust Fund as a source of financing for the maintenance and upgrading of health clinics in Ebola-stricken countries;**

(b) **Requested the Medical Directors Working Group to carry out a systematic mapping exercise of the current United Nations clinics and the related national health facilities and to formulate a more strategic approach to ensure a long-term and comprehensive response to the issue of funding of United Nations clinics. Such a strategy should be based on sound data and information and also address the need to involve Member States in considerations regarding the duty of care for United Nations personnel at the time of programme budgeting.**

## F. Dates and venue of the second session of 2015

87. The Committee expressed appreciation to the International Maritime Organization for its offer to host the Committee's second session of 2015 at its headquarters in London. It was agreed that the session would be scheduled for early October and that the CEB secretariat would consult the members on the exact dates.

# Annex I

## List of participants

*Chair*: Irina Bokova, Director General, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

*Vice-Chair*: Jan Beagle, Deputy Executive Director, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS

*Secretary*: Remo Lalli, Secretary of the Committee

| *Organization* | *Name, title and division* |
|---|---|
| **United Nations** | **Christian Saunders**<br>Director, Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Management |
| | **Patrick Carey**<br>Director, Office of the Chef de Cabinet, Executive Office of the Secretary-General |
| | **Jillann Farmer**<br>Director, Medical Service Division and Chair, Medical Directors Working Group |
| | **Antigoni Axenidou**<br>Director, General Legal Division and Representative of the Legal Network |
| | **Shari Klugman**<br>Executive Secretary, Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions secretariat |
| **International Labour Organization** | **Mohui Jiang**<br>Senior Adviser to the Deputy Director-General |
| **Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations** | **Denis Aitken**<br>Assistant Director-General a.i., Corporate Services, Human Resources and Finance Department |
| | **Regina Gambino**<br>Chief, Procurement Service and Chair, Procurement Network |
| **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization** | **Getachew Engida**<br>Deputy Director-General |
| | **Ana Luiza Thompson-Flores**<br>Assistant Director-General, Bureau of Strategic Planning |
| **International Civil Aviation Organization** | **Fang Liu**<br>Director, Bureau of Administration and Services, newly appointed Secretary-General |

| *Organization* | *Name, title and division* |
|---|---|
| **World Health Organization** | **Hanne Raatikainen**<br>Management Officer |
| **World Bank Group** | **Jeffrey William Culver**<br>Division Manager, Corporate Security |
| **Universal Postal Union** | **Pascal Clivaz**<br>Deputy Director-General |
| **International Telecommunication Union** | **Anders Norsker**<br>Chief, Information Services and Representative, Information and Communications Technology Network |
| **World Meteorological Organization** | **Angiolo Rolli**<br>Director, Resource Management Department |
| **International Maritime Organization** | **Jo Espinoza-Ferrey**<br>Director, Administrative Division |
| **World Intellectual Property Organization** | **Ambi Sundaram**<br>Assistant Director-General, Administration and Management |
| **International Fund for Agricultural Development** | **Lakshmi Menon**<br>Associate Vice-President, Corporate Services Department |
| **United Nations Industrial Development Organization** | **Stefano Bologna**<br>Director, Operational Support Service Branch |
| **World Tourism Organization** | **José G. Blanch**<br>Director, Administration Division |
| **International Atomic Energy Agency** | **Janice Dunn Lee**<br>Deputy Director-General and Head of Management |
| **United Nations Conference on Trade and Development** | **Adnan Issa**<br>Chief of Staff a.i. |
| **United Nations Development Programme** | **Jens Wandel**<br>Assistant Administrator and Director, Bureau of Management |
| | **Darshak Shah**<br>Deputy Assistant Administrator, Deputy Director and Chief Finance Officer, Office of Finance and Administration, and Co-Chair, Finance and Budget Network |

| *Organization* | *Name, title and division* |
|---|---|
| **United Nations Environment Programme** | **Christophe Bouvier**<br>Director, Office for Operations and Corporate Services |
| **Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees** | **Alexander T. Aleinikoff**<br>Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees |
| **United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East** | **Neil Ashcroft**<br>Director of Administrative Support |
| | **Laura Londen**<br>Director of Human Resources |
| **United Nations Children's Fund** | **Martin Mogwanja**<br>Deputy Executive Director |
| | **Lori Issa**<br>United Nations Partnership Specialist |
| **United Nations Population Fund** | **Anne-Birgitte Albrectsen**<br>Deputy Executive Director (Management) |
| | **Subhash K. Gupta**<br>Director, Division for Management Services |
| **World Food Programme** | **Manoj Juneja**<br>Assistant Executive Director and Chief Financial Officer |
| | **Lidia Tutarinova**<br>Inter-Agency Coordinator to the Assistant Executive Director |
| **United Nations Office at Vienna/United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime** | **Dennis Thatchaichawalit**<br>Director, Division of Management |
| **United Nations Human Settlements Programme** | **Jane Nyakairu**<br>Officer-in-Charge, Office of Management |
| **International Trade Centre** | **David Curry**<br>Director, Division of Programme Support |
| **Other participants:** | |
| **International Organization for Migration** | **Laura Thompson**<br>Deputy Director-General |
| **Coordinating Committee for International Staff Unions and Associations of the United Nations System** | **Catherine Comte**<br>Chairperson, International Labour Organization Staff Union |
| **Federation of International Civil Servants' Association** | **Brett Fitzgerald**<br>General Secretary |

| *Organization* | *Name, title and division* |
|---|---|
| **United Nations International Civil Servants Federation** | **Ryad Bouhadef**<br>Executive Secretary |
| **European Organization for Nuclear Research** | **Maurizio Bona**<br>Adviser to the Director General, in charge of relations with international organizations |
| | **Frédéric Hemmer**<br>Head, Information Technology Department |
| **Chief Executives Board secretariat** | **Simona Petrova**<br>Director |
| | **Remo Lalli**<br>Secretary, High-level Committee on Management |
| | **Ronny Lindstrom**<br>Senior Harmonization of Business Practices Programme Coordinator |
| | **Ken Herman**<br>Senior Adviser on Information Management and Policy Coordination |
| | **Richard Maciver**<br>Information and Communications Technology Specialist and Web Manager |
| | **Cheryl Stafford**<br>Programme Officer, High-level Committee on Programmes |
| | **Pieter Kraakman**<br>Human Resources Programme Officer |
| | **Silvan Scheiwiller**<br>Associate Expert in Inter-Agency Coordination and Special Assistant to the Director |

# Annex II

## Checklist of documents

| *Item* | *Title* | *Summary sheet* | *Document symbol* |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Revised provisional agenda | n.a. | CEB/2015/HLCM/1/Rev.3 |
| | Revised provisional programme of work | | CEB/2015/HLCM/1/Add.1 |
| 1 | High-level Committee on Management strategic plan 2013-2016 | Yes | CEB/2013/HLCM/2 |
| | High-level Committee on Management contribution to the Chief Executives Board "Fit for purpose" strategy | | CEB/2014/HLCM/10 |
| | Summary of the Chairs on the joint session of the High-level Committee on Management and the High-level Committee on Programmes of 9 October 2014 | | n.a. |
| | Highlights of the High-level Committee on Management results against the objectives set in the strategic plan | | CEB/2015/HLCM/2 |
| 2 | A World that Counts: Mobilising the Data Revolution for Sustainable Development: report of the Independent Expert Advisory Group on the Data Revolution (for information) | Yes | n.a. |
| | Draft United Nations system data revolution internal programme of work | | CEB/2015/HLCM-HLCP/1 |
| | United Nations system data revolution: general comments on the programme of work | | CEB/2015/HLCM-HLCP/1/Add.1 |
| | Note by CERN on possible collaboration and support to the United Nations system in carrying forward a data revolution | | CEB/2015/HLCM/9 |
| 3 | Note by the Human Resources Network on the progress of the review of the United Nations compensation package | Yes | CEB/2015/HLCM/3 |
| 4 | Draft United Nations system road map for United Nations climate neutrality by 2020 | Yes | CEB/2015/HLCM/4 |
| 5 | Status report on the enterprise resource planning interoperability study | Yes | CEB/2015/HLCM/5 |
| 6 | Status report of the duty of care working group | Yes | CEB/2015/HLCM/6 |
| 7 | United Nations system occupational health and safety framework | Yes | CEB/2015/HLCM/7/Rev.2 |
| | Recommended phased implementation of the draft occupational health and safety framework | | CEB/2015/HLCM/7/Add.1/Rev.2 |

| *Item* | *Title* | *Summary sheet* | *Document symbol* |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Announcement by the Director-General of the International Labour Organization on occupational safety and health in the International Labour Office (for information) | | n.a. |
| | Occupational safety and health in the Office: directive of the International Labour Office (for information) | | |
| | Occupational safety and health in the Office: procedure of the International Labour Office (for information) | | |
| | Occupational health and safety policy in the United Nations system (2010) (for information) | | CEB/2010/HLCM/11 |
| | Review of the medical service in the United Nations system: report of the Joint Inspection Unit (for information) | | JIU/REP/2011/1 |
| 8 | (a) Concept note on costing of oversight mechanisms | Yes | CEB/2015/HLCM/8a |
| | (b) New Inter-Agency Security Management Network policies for High-Level Committee on Management endorsement (for information): | | |
| | • Final report of the Inter-Agency Security Management Network on its twenty-first session | Yes | n.a. |
| | • Safety and security incident recording system policy | | |
| | • Air travel policy | | |
| | (c) International Public Sector Accounting Standards system-wide progress report for the period July-December 2014 (for information) | Yes | CEB/2015/HLCM/8c |
| | (d) Survey on the global service delivery model | Yes | CEB/2015/HLCM/INF |
| | (e) Duty of care in Ebola-affected countries: maintaining the capacity of United Nations clinics | Yes | CEB/2015/HLCM/8e and Add.1 |
| | Note by the Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations on cost sharing for the release of two FICSA officers | n.a. | n.a. |

# Annex III

## Statement by the Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations at the twenty-ninth session of the High-level Committee on Management

Firstly, FICSA would like to congratulate you, Madame Bokova, on having been appointed Chair of this Committee. Based on past exchanges between FICSA and yourself as Director General of UNESCO, we are confident that HLCM is in good hands.

With reference to agenda item 1, entitled "Review of the implementation of the HLCM strategic plan 2013-2016 and follow-up strategy on the CEB post-2015 'Fit for purpose' discussion", FICSA acknowledges the new document CEB/2015/HLCM/2 which summarizes HLCM results thus far achieved with respect to its strategic plan. We also note the decision taken when approving the plan, which was to review and adjust it as necessary during the course of the referenced period. With that in mind, we have carefully studied the plan itself, as found in document CEB/2013/HLCM/2. Although much of the document contains a high-level overview of priorities, FICSA would concur that, in order to contribute to Member States' commitment to enhancing the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, accountability and credibility of the United Nations system, certain changes would be required which do not necessarily appear in the current strategic plan.

We are pleased to read that the HLCM human resources management agenda has, as one of its goals, "the continued development of the international civil service as an independent, neutral, highly skilled and engaged resource to meet the ever-changing requirements of the international community". However, we would like to know how the independence can be measured, as staff are reporting to us their concerns that the independence of the international civil service is in question due to the fact that many organizations are hiring more political appointees, National Professional Officers and local staff to do work which was previously performed by international civil servants. International staff who devote their lives to the United Nations system are essential to guaranteeing the continuation and independence of the international civil service, while leaders come and go. It would, therefore, be important that the strategic plan ensures that lifelong careers will still exist in the new United Nations system.

We note the Secretary-General's agenda to make the United Nations more accountable, and we join the call for accountability at all levels in all organizations. In fact, many of our members report a lack of accountability in numerous organizations, which negatively affects staff moral and motivation.

In order for organizations to be effective and efficient they need to have effective human resources planning policies in place, and we would like to suggest that this be included as a priority item in the HLCM strategic plan.

Our members have reported to us that most organizations do not have career planning policies nor professional development plans in place. In some organizations, especially those which are still lacking proper ERP systems, they are not aware of what skills their staff possess. Without a culture and policy of skill-based management within an organization, the employer is unable to know the actual potential of each staff member and tends to increase the number of staff by

looking for suitable candidates externally without knowing whether the required skills already exist internally. Part of career advancement is developing new skills which can be beneficial for both the organization and the staff member concerned, and we would like to suggest that transparent and objective-based career development policies be included in the strategic plan.

With regard to performance appraisal systems in the organizations, we are of the view that there is nothing wrong with the current systems in place, if they are used as initially intended. We note that paragraph 15 of the strategic plan reads: "A key expected outcome of this endeavour is a strengthened leadership and managerial culture and organizational environment that recognize good performance, strengthen linkage to career development, and sanction poor performance." While we recognize that a performance appraisal system can be used to sanction poor performance, we are disappointed that no reference has been made to establishing and enhancing dialogue between colleagues, as we are of the view that the most important objective of a performance system should be to ensure a continuous dialogue between supervisor and supervisee.

We fully support the idea that ways of maintaining staff motivation at optimal levels must be found and, with that in mind, we would kindly request that ways be explored of establishing and maintaining respect in the workplace and respect between management and its staff. Staff frequently come to see us to voice their displeasure with the lack of respect in the workplace and this affects not only motivation and performance but can even lead to eventual retention problems.

On the subject of management policies, we are of the view that some organizations are unnecessarily top heavy and this significantly drives up costs for Member States without corresponding enhancements to efficiency and effectiveness. Furthermore, studies reveal that in general staff are happier when working in an organization that has a structure with few or no levels of middle management between staff and executives. Well-trained workers will be more productive when they are more directly involved in the decision-making process, rather than closely supervised by many layers of management. For the above reasons, HLCM may wish to suggest appropriate management/staff ratios which would contribute to improved efficiency in the organizations.

We have reviewed the strategic priority of "Delivering as one" and compared against the results achieved to date. FICSA fully supports the concept of "Delivering as one", especially in field duty stations at the country level. We also see the potential enhancements to efficiency were the organizations to expand the concept to the departments of human resources management at the headquarters of the organizations belonging to the United Nations system.

The ICSC review of the total compensation package for staff in the Professional and higher categories is proving to be a challenging exercise in finding a healthy balance. The last meeting of ICSC Working Group I, held in November 2014, left representatives of both administrations and staff displeased with the exercise. Although we could understand some of the reasons for wanting to do away with two rates of pay (single vs. dependency) and replace those by one rate of pay plus a dependency amount in the form of an allowance, serious problems arose when discussing revised salary scales as proposed by the ICSC secretariat which combined into the proposed scales additional elements such as changes in pay at certain steps, proposed changes to the number of steps at some grades as well as the

frequency in the granting of steps which would no longer correspond to the period of performance being appraised. FICSA is of the view that the General Assembly did not request ICSC to bring the margin to 115 at every grade and step but instead was referring to the overall margin. Moreover, there seemed to be no logical rationale for some of the proposed changes, including suggested changes to the values of the steps.

We are also seriously concerned over proposed changes to the education grant (in particular the boarding element) and the consequential effects that it could have on some parents, especially for single parents or parents who must be mobile at the request of the organization. For parents seeking employment, one of their highest priorities is the education of their children.

As everyone is aware, ICSC is meeting this and next week in New York where these items are under discussion, and I expect to hear of the developments shortly.

**Cost-sharing proposal presented by FICSA**

The document which has been submitted by FICSA to this session of HLCM contains a proposed cost-sharing formula which would fairly distribute the annual cost of the two FICSA officers (the President and the General Secretary) across all organizations having staff associations/unions which are members of FICSA.

As background information, in 1980, when CCAQ reaffirmed the principle of full-time release from duties for the two officers of FICSA, it also noted that, although larger organizations might be able to absorb the consequences of releasing staff representatives, it might be necessary to envisage some form of cost-sharing arrangement in respect of Federation officials coming from smaller organizations.

At a meeting of CCAQ, in 1985, a cost-sharing arrangement similar to the one currently being proposed was agreed to on an ad hoc, case-by-case basis and subsequently implemented.

At a meeting of the HR Network in July 2008, the CEB secretariat presented a paper on the issue in which three options were proposed. The meeting supported the option in which the releasing organization pays for the term of office, although some of the smaller organizations insisted that it might be difficult for them to release and fund a staff member to serve with FICSA as they had no replacement capacity.

More recently, the Joint Inspection Unit, in its report JIU/REP/2012/10 entitled "Staff-Management relations in the United Nations specialized agencies and common system" wrote in recommendation 8: "The legislative or Governing Bodies of the organizations under review should mandate their Executive Heads to prioritize the development of a burden-sharing formula and agreement with regard to financing all costs associated with the representational function of officials of staff federations that are recognized in the ICSC statutes and rules of procedures."

Although JIU wrote in paragraph 146 of its report that "the current practice should continue until such a new mechanism is in place", the current refusal of WIPO to release one of its staff members to serve as FICSA General Secretary has created a situation in which the current practice is blocked from continuing.

FICSA is therefore proposing the cost-sharing formula as found in the FICSA document dated 10 March 2015, which has been distributed to the HLCM members and is aligned with the JIU recommendation. This proposed burden-sharing formula

to finance costs associated with the two FICSA officers is designed to create a fair distribution of the costs by taking into account the number of staff in each participating organization and distinguishes between staff at headquarters and local staff in the field with lower pay.

Given the current ICSC comprehensive compensation review exercise, it is urgent for the Federation that a solution be found so that FICSA will be able to continue its full participation in this exercise.

We take this opportunity to thank the members of HLCM for having allowed us to present this FICSA proposal and look forward to learning the conclusions of the Committee's deliberations, which we understand will take place tomorrow in your closed session.

United Nations system CEB/2015/4

# Chief Executives Board for Coordination

28 May 2015

English only

## Report of the High-level Committee on Programmes at its twenty-ninth session

**(ILO headquarters, Geneva, 11 and 12 March 2015)**

*Summary*

In response to a call by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) for the High-level Committee on Programmes to serve as a think tank for supporting CEB deliberations, the Committee focused its work on a limited number of strategic issues of system-wide concern and engaged in substantive discussions on the topics set out below. In particular, it considered in depth the practical applications of the key elements of the post-2015 development agenda and how the United Nations system could concretely further enhance its capacity to support Member States in the transition to and implementation of the future sustainable development framework.

**Urbanization and sustainable development**

The working group of the Committee on a new United Nations urban agenda, under the leadership of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, advanced the preparation of a coherent input by the United Nations system to the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), to be held in Quito in October 2016.

The Committee approved the proposed way forward for the work of the working group, including the preparation of a CEB statement at Habitat III. The Committee requested the working group to deepen its work on multi-stakeholder issue-based partnerships on the new urban agenda and to develop further the paper entitled "Urbanization and sustainable development: a UN system input to a new urban agenda". An active discussion was held on the substance of the evolving paper and the working group was invited to analyse lessons from various urbanization experiences, with a view to developing a shared vision for sustainable urbanization. The Committee agreed to revert to the item at its thirtieth session, with a report on progress.

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Please recycle

**Youth employment**

Under the leadership of the International Labour Organization, the Committee agreed to establish a time-bound task team on youth employment with the objective of launching a global initiative on decent jobs for youth. A key feature of the initiative would be a broad issue-based multi-stakeholder partnership aimed at focusing high-level attention and action on the issue of youth employment. The Committee approved the terms of reference of the task team for endorsement by CEB at its first regular session of 2015 and provided substantive guidance on the proposed elements of the initiative.

**Inequality, human rights and the post-2015 development agenda**

Inequality is a central element of the post-2015 development agenda and an issue of great concern to the entire United Nations system. The Committee acknowledged that pursuing a new approach focused on reducing inequality would have profound implications for the development work of the system. The Committee requested the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to lead the effort to develop, over the course of 2015, a positioning paper that would articulate a system-wide framework to guide the work of the organizations of the United Nations system relating to inequality in the context of the post-2015 development agenda, taking appropriately into account the various tensions and sensitivities covered during the discussion. To contribute to that effort, members of the Committee were invited to provide OHCHR with their perspectives, approaches and expectations. The Committee further requested the working group on the new urban agenda and the task team on youth employment to address inequality as an integral part of their respective efforts to pilot the key elements of the post-2015 agenda.

**Data revolution**

In reviewing the draft internal programme of work prepared by a core group of organizations designated by CEB, the Committee emphasized that the data revolution was integral to the transformative nature of the post-2015 development agenda. The Committee generally expressed support for the proposed initiatives, while noting the importance of close coordination with other existing activities and intergovernmental discussions. The Committee agreed that the group should proceed to develop the document further, along with input from the High-level Committee on Management and the United Nations Development Group, for consideration by CEB at its first regular session of 2015.

**Next session**

The thirtieth session of the Committee will be held at United Nations Headquarters on 12 and 13 October 2015.

# I. Introduction

1. The High-level Committee on Programmes of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) held its twenty-ninth session at the headquarters of the International Labour Organization (ILO) in Geneva, on 11 and 12 March 2015. The agenda of the meeting and the list of participants are provided in annexes I and II, respectively, to the present report.

2. The Deputy Director General of ILO, Gilbert Houngbo, welcomed the Committee to ILO headquarters. He noted that the twenty-ninth session of the Committee was being held at a critical juncture, when the international community was assessing progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals and deliberating on the future sustainable development framework. A major challenge was to reposition the United Nations system to support Member States effectively in the implementation of the new agenda. ILO was engaged in its own process of reform in order to adjust to the changing world of the twenty-first century. He further noted that adjustments in the areas of management, programming and operations were needed to make the United Nations system ready for the new development framework. In that context, he noted that the Committee had an important role in supporting CEB by promoting policy coherence, programmatic coordination and innovation.

3. The Chair expressed thanks to Mr. Houngbo, on behalf of the Committee, for his statement and for generously hosting the session. He continued by noting that CEB, at its second session of 2014, had endorsed the role of the Committee as a think tank for supporting the deliberations of the Board and the recommendation to focus the work of the Committee on a limited number of strategic issues and emerging global challenges faced by the United Nations system. The agenda of the session, which focused on four strategic themes, reflected that new direction for the Committee.

4. He said that the joint session of the High-level Committee on Management and the Committee, held in October 2014, had provided a strong impetus for the Committee to assume a leadership role in exploring the practical applications of fit-for-purpose considerations vis-à-vis the forthcoming post-2015 development agenda. The agenda of the Committee, with its four interlinked items, had clearly responded to that by addressing the key elements of the post-2015 development agenda, which the Committee had been tasked by CEB to examine closely, namely universality, integration, human rights and inequality, and the data revolution. CEB had supported the proposal of the Committee that it focus on the issues of sustainable urbanization and youth employment as present-day global challenges, within which the Committee could pursue in-depth deliberations on the future role of the United Nations system and its capacity to support Member States effectively, mobilizing and deploying its collective capacity more deliberately and with more agility, including by fostering issue-based coalitions and partnerships. He urged the Committee, in its deliberations, to look across and integrate the different aspects of the United Nations pillars: peace and security, development and human rights. He requested the members to reach out actively to their counterparts in the High-level Committee on Management and the United Nations Development Group in order to align and bring the streams of work together.

## II. Agenda item 1: urbanization and sustainable development

5. Opening the issue of urbanization and sustainable development, the Chair recalled that, at its twenty-seventh session, in March 2014, the Committee had established, under the leadership of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), an ad hoc time-bound working group on a new United Nations urban agenda, to prepare a coherent input by the United Nations system to the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III). The working group had been tasked with developing a paper on urbanization and sustainable development, for endorsement by CEB before the holding of Habitat III.

6. He said that, at its twenty-eighth session, in October 2014, the Committee had requested the working group to use that initiative as a prototype to showcase the practical application of fit-for-purpose efforts by the United Nations system, in particular the forging of multi-stakeholder issue-based coalitions and partnerships, within the context of the larger discussion on the post-2015 development agenda. At its twenty-ninth session, the Committee had before it a note prepared by the working group on the way forward for its work and a proposal for fostering multi-stakeholder partnerships in support of sustainable urbanization. He invited the Committee to review those proposals and provide guidance to the working group on how best to advance its work.

7. Introducing the note entitled "Urbanization and sustainable development: a UN system input to a new urban agenda", the Principal Adviser on Policy and Strategic Planning of the Office of the Executive Director of UN-Habitat, Naison Mutizwa-Mangiza, explained that it contained three sections: a proposed way forward for the work of the group, including a recommendation on the purpose and title of the paper, a revised timeline and a proposal for a CEB statement to Habitat III; a proposal for multi-stakeholder issue-based partnerships on the new urban agenda; and a revised paper on urbanization and sustainable development, reflecting comments made at and since the twenty-eighth session of the Committee.

8. Regarding the multi-stakeholder partnerships, he pointed out that the proposed initiative was intended to link a United Nations system-wide approach on urbanization and sustainable development with the specific implementation of the new urban agenda through multi-stakeholder engagement. To that end, the working group planned to assess existing partnerships and identify and engage with new partners in the development of a United Nations system multi-stakeholder approach. A draft strategy on multi-stakeholder partnerships on the new urban agenda would be prepared for consideration by the Committee at its thirtieth session, with a view to preparing for its launch at Habitat III, in October 2016.

9. In the ensuing discussion, the Committee expressed support for the approach proposed by the working group. In particular, it agreed with the proposed way forward, including the revised timeline, bearing in mind that some dates of meetings of the Preparatory Committee for Habitat III might be subject to change. The working group was encouraged to consider adding to the timeline country-level case studies to further assess and inform the proposed approach, with one member proposing Palestinian urban refugee experiences for such a purpose. The title of the paper was confirmed as reading "Urbanization and sustainable development: a UN system input to a new urban agenda". While expressing support for the proposed

purpose of the paper, the Committee was of the view that the paper could be further sharpened in line with its comments.

10. The Committee also agreed with the recommendation of the working group that CEB issue a statement on urbanization and sustainable development at Habitat III. In that context, the Committee emphasized that the statement needed to strike the right tone, focus on joint actions and commitments with impact and emphasize an approach to urbanization centred on people and based on science and human rights. Building on the content of the paper on urbanization and sustainable development, the statement should reflect an integrated approach to the topic. It also needed to take into account issues such as disaster risk reduction, climate change and the rural-urban nexus.

11. The members of the Committee welcomed the proposal for multi-stakeholder issue-based partnerships on a new urban agenda. The Committee stressed that the partnerships needed to be inclusive, specific and add value for broader efforts towards sustainable urbanization. In particular, they needed to focus on those areas in which the multilateral system in general, and the United Nations system in particular, had been able to demonstrate impact and results. The challenge was to go beyond an intellectual approach, focusing on an ideal partnership and to turn a partnership strategy into a concrete initiative. It was proposed that partnership initiatives should be identified that could be profiled, with achievements and lessons presented at Habitat III. In that context, it was suggested that the working group should reach out to United Nations country teams to profile current multi-stakeholder partnerships on the ground in which organizations of the United Nations system played a role.

12. Noting that much could be learned from existing partnerships and experiences, the Committee encouraged the working group to take into account continuing partnerships, including the Secretary-General's High-level Advisory Group on Sustainable Transport and the Inter-Parliamentary Union. The working group was also invited to examine subnational partnerships and joint financing mechanisms when assessing existing partnerships. At the global level, the Economic and Social Council partnership forum could serve as an intergovernmental sounding board once the paper had been finalized. It was noted that partnerships were also discussed within the context of the process of financing for development. At the regional level, it was suggested that the working group should reflect on ways to link up with regional preparatory processes for Habitat III to ensure that its work benefited from regional perspectives and research. Members also highlighted potential difficulties in managing the expectations of external partners and the importance of agreeing upon rules of engagement at the outset.

13. In relation to the paper on urbanization and sustainable development, active debates ensued as to whether there was indeed a model for sustainable urbanization. Some members stressed that the United Nations needed to uphold and advocate universal norms, principles and values and the standards of the key functions and services that cities should provide, including energy efficiency and accessibility, resilience, protection against floods and earthquakes, waste management, housing, transport, jobs, education and health services. Others were of the view that the paper should avoid being overly prescriptive, arguing that there was no single optimal, universal urbanization model, but a multitude of diverse pathways leading to sustainable towns in rural and urban areas. Furthermore, it was noted that the trend

towards urbanization might not necessarily be inevitable or even desirable in all circumstances and that sustainable development encompassed rural and urban areas. Having exchanged views, the Committee said that the paper should focus on analysing and presenting important lessons learned that could be gleaned from the multitude of urbanization pathways chosen by a variety of actors. Through an analysis of those pathways and the lessons learned, the paper should derive a shared vision of sustainable urbanization that could inform countries in developing sustainable urbanization strategies.

14. Members pointed to additional issues that needed to be addressed in the paper. They included children and youth; shrinking cities; health, including HIV/AIDS; displacement and marginalization, with particular attention paid to vulnerable groups, including migrants, refugees, sex workers and people using drugs; governance, efforts to combat corruption and safe cities; the role of culture and technology, including information and communications technology; rural-urban migration and mobility; climate change; risk management; resource flows; and consumption patterns and options for low-carbon growth. The World Humanitarian Summit, to be held in 2016, was noted as an intergovernmental meeting of relevance to the initiative of the Committee on sustainable urbanization. Members also stressed the need for coherence with other United Nations inter-agency workstreams, in order to bring the pieces together, including the Habitat III task team and the Programme Working Group of the United Nations Development Group.

15. In conclusion, the Chair encouraged the working group to develop the paper further, especially from the perspective of the role of multilateral institutions in supporting sustainable urbanization. In so doing, the paper should focus to a greater extent on lessons learned, innovative approaches and best practices by applying evidence-based analysis. By extracting and amplifying best practices, the paper would serve as a helpful tool to come to a shared understanding and vision on an "urban future we want" and on the optimal added value of the United Nations system regarding the issue of urbanization.

**Conclusion**

16. **The Committee approved the proposed way forward for the work of the working group, including the title and purpose of the paper on a United Nations system input to a new urban agenda, the revised timeline and the preparation of a CEB statement on urbanization and sustainable development as an input to Habitat III. The Committee requested the working group, under the leadership of UN-Habitat, to deepen its work on multi-stakeholder issue-based partnerships on the new urban agenda and to develop the paper further in the light of the discussions. The Committee agreed to revert to the item at its thirtieth session, with a report on progress.**

## III. Agenda item 2: inequality, human rights and the post-2015 development agenda

17. It was recalled that, at its twenty-third session, the Committee had taken note of the overwhelming support for the inclusion of human rights issues in its agenda and agreed to include human rights policy coherence as a regular agenda item

(CEB/2012/4, para. 56). It was also recalled that, at a retreat following its twenty-fourth session, the Committee had agreed to focus on, among other things, inequality as an emerging policy and programmatic issue of concern to the entire United Nations system. Equality had been highlighted as a thread that should be woven into the consideration of any issue chosen for further work (CEB/2012/6, para. 73). At its twenty-eighth session, the Committee had reiterated that it needed to reflect in greater detail on the five core elements of the post-2015 agenda identified by CEB, namely universality; inequality, including by applying a gender and an intergenerational perspective; human rights; the data revolution, including the development of a digital agenda for the United Nations system; and accountability (see CEB/2014/6, para. 8), and had highlighted, in particular, universality and inequality as critical issues in need of further reflection on their practical implications.

18. Against that backdrop, the Chair brought to the attention of the Committee a discussion note prepared by OHCHR, exploring the concept of equality as a central element of the post-2015 development agenda and as a driver for greater mainstreaming of human rights in sustainable development. The paper also highlighted the practical implications of a human rights-based approach to addressing inequality in the post-2015 development agenda and proposed specific recommendations to promote the systematic integration of equality concerns into the policies, programming and practices of the organizations of the United Nations system. Acknowledging the central importance of equality as a consideration cutting across the post-2015 development agenda, the Chair invited the Committee to examine the discussion paper critically and analyse the underlying assumptions of that nexus.

19. Observing their relevance to the other agenda items, the Chair also called upon the Committee to examine how considerations of inequality could be integrated more strongly into its work. Specifically, he proposed that both the working group on the new urban agenda and the task team on youth employment could be asked to address the issue of inequality in their continuing work to pilot the key elements of the post-2015 development agenda.

20. Introducing the discussion paper, the Chief of the Development and Economic and Social Issues Branch of OHCHR, Craig Mokhiber, cited inequality as a defining concern of the time, a subject that had been highly visible in deliberations on the post-2015 development agenda. Over the past decade, inequality had been exacerbated both globally and within countries; that lesson had led to inequality becoming a principle focus throughout the sustainable development goals. He observed that the strong focus on inequality posed challenges for the United Nations system with regard to its fitness for purpose, given that that would require a new and different approach to its development work.

21. He, together with Sally-Anne Way, also of OHCHR, discussed the concept of inequality in broad terms, going beyond income inequality. To support a shared understanding, they introduced the terms "non-discrimination",[1] "equality"[2] and "equity"[3] and described three types of inequality — vertical (between individuals),

[1] Defined as "the prohibition of distinctions between people that are based on impermissible grounds that have the purpose or effect of impairing the enjoyment of rights".
[2] Defined as "substantive equality of both opportunity and outcomes for all".
[3] Defined as "fairness in the distribution of benefits and opportunities".

horizontal (between social groups) and between countries. The Committee was reminded that United Nations norms and standards mandated a focus on addressing inequality and discrimination and that Member States had a normative responsibility and affirmative obligation to promote equality in their policies. Gross inequalities were not an accident of nature, nor were they inevitable, but rather they were a policy choice.

22. They further stressed that inequality undercut not only economic growth and poverty reduction, but also social cohesion, peace and other dimensions of sustainable development. It was thus central to all three pillars of the work of the United Nations. In that regard, the inclusion of a sustainable development goal aimed at promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, providing access to justice for all and building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels (see A/68/970, goal 16) was welcome and it would be important to examine its implications for the future efforts of the United Nations system, including through the lens of inequality.

23. The Committee was reminded that, in the post-2015 era, no development goal would be deemed fulfilled unless it was met for all and that that would require the United Nations system to pay explicit attention to horizontal social groups and the aspects of all goals and targets that reduced inequality. To that end, the representatives underscored the importance of a broader disaggregation of data and the need to develop a methodology to monitor progress towards the reduction of all three types of inequality. They proposed that, as an outcome of the discussion, a system-wide paper could be produced, providing practical guidance on addressing inequality and reflecting the expertise and perspectives of the entities of the United Nations system.

24. The Committee was unanimous in welcoming that timely initiative, praising the paper as comprehensive, thought-provoking and helpful in building a system-wide common understanding. Members expressed particular appreciation for the fact that the paper integrated various aspects of the work of the United Nations and was mindful of the complexity and sensitivities inherent in the subject. The Committee said that the United Nations system had before it an opportunity to pursue a new bold approach, noting that, to remain relevant in the post-2015 era, promoting equality must be a defining principle of its work. There was broad agreement that the paradigm shift to a focus on reducing inequality in the post-2015 development agenda would have strong implications for the United Nations system.

25. The Committee acknowledged that in recent years great strides had been made in integrating human rights into the work of the United Nations system. The Secretary-General's Human Rights Up Front initiative was noted as a positive example of the system moving from principle to practice. During the discussion, members raised various manifestations of inequality, such as slum proliferation, spatial segregation (of refugees) and the digital divide, noting that those were symptoms of inequality and stressing that it was necessary to address their root causes. Intergenerational equity was emphasized as a central dimension that should be reflected in the paper. It was further observed that the sustainable development goals and targets were not a replacement for the human rights conventions or vice versa, but rather that they complemented one another.

26. Various challenges to taking an approach to development focused on reducing inequality were identified during the discussion, including the tension between

principle and practice and the need to look at the politically sensitive structural issues underlying inequality. Members cited difficulties facing the United Nations system in promoting equality in the current development paradigm, observing that sovereign countries made their own policy decisions that affected inequality for better or worse and that the role of the United Nations system tended to be limited to the production and analysis of evidence and advocacy. On that issue, the representatives of OHCHR reiterated that the United Nations system must be true to its norms and standards and assist Member States in fulfilling the obligations into which they had voluntarily entered.

27. Some members particularly highlighted the tension between equality of opportunities versus that of outcomes. Noting the contradiction whereby human rights might be violated in the process of enforcing equality of outcome, a question was posed as to how much inequality could be considered tolerable in a society. Others pointed out the complexity and risk in linking inalienable human rights with a time-bound set of goals that had been negotiated at the intergovernmental level. It was stressed that those and other fundamental tensions needed to be duly captured and brought to the attention of CEB and examined in the course of the further work of the Committee on the subject.

28. Considering inequality in the context of the post-2015 agenda, the Committee highlighted its connection with the concept of universality, given that inequality was a concern confronting all countries. The need for differentiated modes of engagement with different categories of countries was pointed out as part of the challenge facing the United Nations system in promoting equality as part of a universal agenda. Members also observed that another important new feature of the post-2015 development agenda was a proposed sustainable development goal relating to justice and rule of law, which would bring visibility to those previously neglected aspects of sustainable development and enable a clear connection across the three pillars of the work of the United Nations. Linking inequality to such concerns as an increase in crimes and, more broadly, to the undercutting of peace, the importance of examining the system-wide implications of that new opportunity was noted.

29. References to data and the monitoring of inequality permeated the discussion, given their criticality to ensuring that no one was left behind, a defining characteristic of the universal agenda. It was agreed that every United Nations entity had a role in measuring and documenting inequality in its area of work and the importance of moving away from averages and towards disaggregation was recognized as necessary to inform and support targeted, evidence-based policy formulation, programming and action. Members of the Committee stressed that the United Nations had a duty to document and expose inequality in all areas and advocate against it.

30. Measuring inequality was considered challenging, given an absence of agreed international indicators; however, that presented an opportunity for the Committee to help to develop some recommendations on a manageable set of measures. Citing examples from the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Health Organization, the representatives of OHCHR invited agencies to provide information on existing methodologies that could be used to track inequality in the post-2015 context. Specific suggestions were made for the development of an inequality marker, building on experience of the gender marker, and for

mainstreaming the collection of disaggregated data in the surveys supported by United Nations organizations, to enable monitoring of the progressive reduction of inequality over time. In some interventions, the difficulties associated with disaggregated data were pointed out and mitigation measures to be taken up front called for.

31. Responding to the request from OHCHR to harvest expertise, several agencies highlighted their activities relevant to inequality, such as zero discrimination in the response to HIV/AIDS; the promotion of universal coverage to help to reduce health inequality; efforts to bridge the digital divide; the City Prosperity Index that included an equity dimension; and the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

32. The Committee expressed strong support for the proposal to develop the discussion paper into a concise, practical and action-oriented system-wide framework, and a number of members offered suggestions to that end. Recognizing the complexity of the subject, several stressed the need to further elaborate on, and precisely distinguish between, the various human rights concepts and to make clearer links with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Some said that the paper should more strongly affirm the centrality of equality considerations in the post-2015 development agenda and that the reference to the protection of the vulnerable in fragile States should be strengthened, given that crises could exacerbate inequality. A suggestion was also made to elaborate further on the role of the United Nations system in supporting Member States in reducing inequality and providing examples of best practices that they could consider replicating. It was also proposed that addressing inequality should be mainstreamed into the human rights programming principles of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks.

33. Other specific issues suggested for incorporation included child rights principles; measurements of inequality based on deprivation; the responsibilities of the private sector with regard to the privatization of social services; the incentive perspective of human rights (i.e. the right to development), in particular in relation to health and education; legal policy and its relationship to inequality; the relationship between inequality, job creation and wages; and fair and equitable access to, and control over, natural resources and intergenerational equity; and access to environmental justice and the rule of law.

34. In concluding the discussion, the Chair recognized the overwhelming support of the Committee for the initiative and the significant buy-in for taking the discussion paper forward to produce a system-wide framework. He requested OHCHR to take the lead in developing a positioning paper for the Committee over the course of 2015 that would articulate the approach of the United Nations system to inequality and human rights in the context of the new development agenda and serve as a guiding framework to examine and orient the work of United Nations entities in that area, referring to the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women as an aspirational model. As stressed by members during the discussions, the paper should be precise in defining terminology and concepts, capture tensions and sensitivities and be pragmatic and action-focused. While the work would continue over the course of 2015, the Chair requested OHCHR to produce the positioning paper for review by the Committee at its thirtieth session and by CEB at its second regular session of 2015. To contribute

to that effort, the Chair invited each member to submit to OHCHR a short note on how his or her organization defined and approached the issues of inequality and discrimination, and what he or she wished to see included in a system-wide approach to addressing inequality in the post-2015 context.

**Conclusion**

35. **The Committee requested OHCHR to lead the system-wide effort to develop, over the course of 2015, a positioning paper that would articulate a system-wide framework to guide the work of the organizations of the United Nations system relating to inequality in the context of the post-2015 agenda. To contribute to that effort, the Committee invited each member to provide OHCHR with a note outlining the perspectives, approaches and expectations of their respective organizations. The Committee requested the working group on the new urban agenda and the task team on youth employment to address inequality as an integral part of their respective efforts to pilot the key elements of the post-2015 agenda.**

## IV. Agenda item 3: data revolution

36. The Chair opened the discussion on the data revolution by noting that data were a key component of the activities of United Nations system organizations and that the system had an important role to play in supporting a data revolution for sustainable development. Recalling that CEB, at its second regular session of 2014, had called upon the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Population Fund, the regional commissions and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat to lead the preparation of a programme of work that responded to the call for a data revolution, he expressed thanks to the organizations involved for providing a pragmatic but ambitious vision on how to move forward. He noted that the same documents that were before the Committee had been submitted to the High-level Committee on Management for its review and had also been shared with the Development Operations Coordination Office.

37. In introducing the item, the Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Thomas Gass, recalled that the report of the Independent Expert Advisory Group on the Data Revolution for Sustainable Development, entitled "A world that counts: mobilising the data revolution for sustainable development", had already laid the groundwork for a debate on the data revolution. It included a comprehensive list of actions to be taken by a broad range of stakeholders to foster a revolution in data. In addition, it clearly described some of the contradictions inherent in the data world where, for example, an overwhelming amount of data could coexist with the reality that national statistical programmes lacked sufficient capacity to provide the data that were necessary to understand fundamental facts about their environment.

38. Turning to the proposed draft internal programme of work for the data revolution, he noted that the working group had faced challenges while preparing the document that had been requested. First, the data revolution concept had not yet been fully discussed within intergovernmental forums and the Statistical

Commission had met only in the first week of March in New York. Second, the data revolution was very closely linked to the continuing intergovernmental deliberations on the sustainable development goals and the post-2015 development agenda. Lastly, the rapid pace of change within the data field would require the United Nations system to address the issue on a continuing basis.

39. He continued by presenting the four initiatives contained in the draft programme of work. The first initiative, the "United Nations system data innovation lab", sought to expand the capacity of the system to drive innovation. It would aim to strengthen the collective experience of the system to use new and emerging data sources, building on the work of the Global Pulse initiative. The second initiative, "Data visualization and dashboard", looked to enhance the role of the United Nations system in data dissemination, exchange and communication by building on the many existing activities in that area. The third initiative, a world forum on sustainable development data, would build new and fortify existing partnerships, using the unique convening role of the United Nations as a catalyst and provide a space for sharing ideas and experiences for data improvement, advocacy for innovation and technology transfer. The fourth initiative was an effort to bring together existing data assets by building a United Nations system data catalogue in order to make those data more accessible.

40. He then provided a briefing to the Committee on the outcomes of the work of the Statistical Commission, which had recently concluded its annual session and had been attended by a record number of statisticians. He noted that the debate within the Commission had focused on the post-2015 development agenda, in particular the development of indicators to measure the achievement of the future sustainable development goals. The Commission had confirmed that the development of the indicator framework was the prerogative of Member States, through their national statistical offices, with the statistical entities of the United Nations playing an important supporting role. That approach would ensure the technical solidity of the indicators, including their credibility and acceptability, their sustainability and their consistency over the 15-year time frame. In line with that approach, the Commission had decided to establish an inter-agency expert group, consisting of three to four country representatives from the five regions, to work on the indicator framework. That mechanism would provide strategic oversight for the implementation of adequate information systems in support of the post-2015 development agenda. The Commission had also taken note of the report of the Independent Expert Advisory Group on the Data Revolution for Sustainable Development, recommended new investment in national statistical capacity and recognized that a world forum on sustainable development data would be a suitable platform for intensified cooperation with other stakeholders.

41. Concluding his introduction, he noted that the working group had also prepared a survey that would give agencies an opportunity to describe existing activities as they related to the some 20 recommendations that formed the heart of the report of the Independent Expert Advisory Group.

42. The Chair invited the members of the Committee to share their views, especially on how to move forward with the four specific initiatives included in the draft programme of work.

43. Noting the importance and timeliness of the topic, the members expressed appreciation for the draft programme of work, congratulating the working group on

creating an operational plan in a brief period. The members who were not part of the core group indicated that they looked forward to actively contributing as the work moved forward. Many members noted the increasingly important role of monitoring progress within the context of the post-2015 agenda and agreed with the assessment that access to reliable and timely data formed the foundation of monitoring activities.

44. The four initiatives received broad support from the Committee, with several members indicating that they were closely linked to existing data-related activities. The need for better data to support evidence-based programming was recognized. Stressing the need for data literacy within the United Nations, the Committee considered the initiative to strengthen the capacity of the system to drive data innovation to be highly relevant and welcomed the possibility of including new innovations in data collection and the incorporation of non-traditional sources. Some members also stressed the need to adhere to the fundamental principles of official statistics that had been approved by the General Assembly and to find ways to extend them to new data sources. Many members of the Committee voiced support for the leadership role of the Global Pulse initiative in the proposed data innovation lab, with several organizations noting their existing partnerships with it.

45. The proposed world forum on sustainable development data, intended to create and strengthen partnerships for coordination and capacity-building in data-driven sustainable development, also received support from the members and was seen by many as a unique opportunity to bring together a diverse range of stakeholders. Some, however, stressed that that activity needed to be closely coordinated with the plans of Member States, in particular the work of the Statistical Commission, and therefore sought clarity regarding the role of the United Nations.

46. The fourth initiative, a United Nations system data catalogue, aimed at promoting greater use of existing data assets within the United Nations system and by the public, was also well received by the Committee.

47. Members stressed that the proposed initiatives should not be considered in isolation and underscored the importance of ensuring linkages between the initiatives whenever possible, as well as between the initiatives and existing activities. During the discussion, many members described existing data collection and analysis activities within their institutions, suggesting that, as the programme of work developed, it should seek to integrate existing activities rather than create new ones. UNEP Live, for example, was already a highly developed data visualization tool, which was flexible for sharing and exchanging data and available to all to contribute to and use as a public good. Furthermore, several members noted the importance of including a broader range of data in forthcoming efforts, mentioning in particular humanitarian data.

48. The issue of resource requirements for the initiatives was raised. It was suggested that more details regarding resource requirements would be necessary. Noting that the initiative on the data innovation lab, in particular, mentioned the use of secondments as a mechanism to meet its human resources needs, several members indicated that that might prove difficult to implement.

49. Members also stressed the importance of linking the initiatives in the draft programme of work to the activities of the Committee for the Coordination of

Statistical Activities, a body comprising the chief statisticians of United Nations organizations and representatives of other intergovernmental entities.

50. Going beyond the specific initiatives presented, members noted several other points, including the importance of data quality control and the need for data standards, as well as policies and safeguards that addressed any legal aspects associated with data. Furthermore, the importance of going beyond collecting and managing data and enhancing the capacity to interpret data was underscored, with one member noting the value of a more scientific approach that included scenario modelling. The need to strengthen national statistical capacity was raised by several members. While acknowledging the importance of new data sources, concern was expressed at the state of basic data collection, in particular vital registration, and the view expressed that new initiatives needed to be carefully weighed, especially because there was limited funding.

51. The discussion also highlighted tensions between the role of official statistics and the concept of "big data", which was characterized as an "avalanche of data from the Internet", as well as from other sources. It was noted that that type of data would certainly have an impact on the statistics community, which was addressing the issue through various mechanisms, including the Global Working Group on Big Data for Official Statistics. It was predicted that in the future that kind of non-traditional data would complement traditional statistics, although there were several obstacles to overcome, such as how that type of data would be governed. Such issues as privacy, confidentiality, cost, validation and quality assurance would all need to be addressed.

52. The Chair observed a positive endorsement of the efforts to address the way in which the United Nations system could play a role in supporting a data revolution for sustainable development. He stressed that it was about a revolution of big data in the United Nations — not by the United Nations — and, given that all members of CEB were global custodians of data, the system should focus on how to bring their experience and expertise collectively and effectively to the data revolution in the service of Member States.

53. Summarizing the discussion, he noted that the programme of work presented some interesting initiatives and that the Committee had generally accepted the initiative on the United Nations system data innovation lab, with the Global Pulse initiative as the lead entity, along with the visualization platform and dashboard, led by the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, and the United Nations system data catalogue, led by the Office of Information and Communications Technology and the CEB secretariat. While the Committee had generally expressed support for the proposed world forum on sustainable development data, it had been of the opinion that it needed closer coordination with the activities of Member States through the Statistical Commission. Noting that the objective of the discussion was to provide feedback to the working group for the forthcoming discussion by CEB on the subject, the Chair called for the working group to take into consideration the discussions of the Committee as it revised the document before the CEB session.

**Conclusion**

54. **The Committee agreed that the working group should proceed to develop further the draft programme of work, in the light of the discussions of the**

**Committee, along with inputs from the High-level Committee on Management and the United Nations Development Group, for consideration by CEB at its first regular session of 2015.**

## V. Agenda item 4: youth employment

55. The Vice-Chair of the Committee recalled that, at its twenty-eighth session, in October 2014, against the backdrop of earlier work undertaken by the Committee on the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Youth and endorsed by CEB at its first regular session of 2013, the Committee had considered whether the unprecedented employment challenges currently facing young women and men warranted its focused attention among the broader set of youth issues. Seeing the youth employment crisis as a universal challenge to which many organizations of the United Nations system could contribute, the Committee had voiced support for an ILO proposal to establish a time-bound task team on youth employment and requested a core group, led by ILO, to develop terms of reference and a timeline of its work for consideration by the Committee and eventual endorsement by CEB. Furthermore, the Committee had stipulated that the work on youth employment should provide a prototype platform for applying the five key elements of the post-2015 development agenda identified by CEB and supporting fit-for purpose efforts by mobilizing capacity in the United Nations system and operationalizing the establishment of issue-based partnerships.

56. The Vice-Chair drew attention to the draft terms of reference for a time-bound task team to develop a proposal for a joint/global United Nations initiative on decent jobs for youth and to the proposed elements of a draft strategy for the initiative. The documents had been prepared in consultation within the core group, taking into account feedback from the Committee at its twenty-eighth session, and submitted by ILO on behalf of the group.

57. André Bogui of ILO delivered some introductory remarks, setting the scene for the discussion. He presented statistics to illustrate the magnitude and depth of the youth unemployment crisis, including the fact that nearly 40 per cent, or some 74 million, of the unemployed were between 15 and 24 years of age. Many more were not captured in unemployment statistics because they had dropped out of training and/or had ceased searching for work. Young people trapped in jobs in the informal economy compounded the challenging situation. Member States had served the United Nations system with mandates to tackle the youth employment crisis and to provide young men and women with opportunities for decent and productive work. The Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals had placed importance on promoting decent work for youth, including in its proposal to the General Assembly on targets that aimed to capture the improvement in the quantity and quality of jobs (see A/68/970, goal 4, target 4.4, and goal 8, targets 8.5, 8.6 and 8.b). ILO foresaw that the initiative of the Committee on decent jobs for youth could contribute to the future implementation of the sustainable development goals.

58. The lead on the initiative, the Director of the Employment Policy Department of ILO, Azita Berar Awad, introduced the terms of reference and a paper setting out the proposed key elements of the initiative. She emphasized that the Committee was considering an ambitious agenda that sought to respond to a fast-evolving challenge where expectations from Member States were high. The initiative was proposed to

take current efforts to address youth unemployment to a higher level of ambition, with an emphasis on scaling up action and on knowledge dissemination and capacity-building on what worked for youth employment. She cited a wealth of existing analyses, mandates and platforms to drive the work forward. She invited the views of the Committee on whether the initiative should be characterized as "joint" or "global," noting that, were it confirmed that broader stakeholder engagement was in fact desired, then "global" would be more suitable.

59. In the paper containing the key elements, 12 principles to guide the development of the initiative were presented. They were based on the extensive collective experience of the United Nations system in promoting employment and implementing programmes for young people. The initiative comprised four interconnected pillars, namely a strategic, multi-stakeholder group; expanded and scaled-up country-level action on decent jobs for youth; a global knowledge management platform on decent jobs for youth; and a funding facility. She emphasized the importance of engaging, on a regular and permanent basis, actors from outside the United Nations system, including youth representatives, in all four pillars.

60. The Committee voiced broad support for the terms of reference and welcomed the paper. Members observed that the subject was very relevant and that Member States were clearly looking to the United Nations system to assist in stimulating employment opportunities for youth. The core group was commended for the work that it had completed to date. The emphasis on normative-operational linkages was appreciated, along with the clarity of the application of the five key elements of the post-2015 development agenda. The representatives of the World Tourism Organization, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and UN-Habitat expressed interest in their organizations joining the task team to contribute to the development of the proposal.

61. During the discussion, several speakers commented on large global trends that affected youth employment, such as jobless growth, demographic trends, labour mobility, the positive and negative impacts of technology on the employment market, the lack of investment in youth, and trade and macroeconomic policies that precluded sound national youth policies. Several observed that sustained, distributed growth was fundamental to the post-2015 agenda in its entirety. It was therefore necessary for the task team to take into consideration long-term structural issues, given that the youth employment challenge should not be seen in isolation from the need for broader employment creation across all age groups. At the same time, some speakers noted that special attention needed to be paid to children under 18 years of age, both in terms of education (leading to employability) and child labour (a matter of child rights). The Committee, however, was also reminded of the risk that normative frameworks could be undermined when different standards were applied — either by creating a category of junior rights for those over 18 years of age or undercutting standards for those under 18 years of age.

62. Members expressed support for the draft terms of reference and proposed minor changes. Several stressed the need to articulate better the linkages with the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Youth and other actors or initiatives, such as the Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development, the Youth Employment

Network and the World Bank Group initiative on solutions for youth employment, and to clarify the terms of reference accordingly. On the guiding principles identified in the terms of reference, observations were made regarding the importance of placing youth employment in the larger context of sustainable development, especially in terms of national development priorities and plans; removing ambiguity about what was meant by complementarity and coherence between public policy and the private sector; and linking the initiative to broader investment in youth.

63. On the key elements of the initiative, members urged the task team to ensure that the initiative was action-oriented and focused, stressing that it needed to have a genuine impact on youth employment. The importance of the entities of the United Nations system working together in integrated programmes on youth employment was acknowledged; however, it was said that the strategy would benefit from further elaboration on the added value that the United Nations system brought in that field, especially taking into consideration the various factors affecting youth employment that were beyond the control of United Nations entities. Given that reality, there was strong support for the initiative being global in nature, recognizing that it was essential to go beyond the actors of the United Nations system and include the private sector (with the appropriate corporate social responsibility policies and safeguards) and Governments (including local authorities). The Committee also firmly reinforced the importance of engaging youth in the initiative, including in any team that would support its work.

64. The point was made that it would be important to ensure that the initiative would facilitate and empower the work of others, not attempt too much coordination or restriction of actors. The Committee agreed that the partnership mechanism needed to be flexible and nimble. In that respect, it was suggested that the need for a formal executive secretariat should be carefully reconsidered. Further elaboration on the rationale for an approach that included resource mobilization was requested, as was consideration of whether a global facility might have an impact on other financing streams in the system. The need for baseline data on youth was raised, in part in order to monitor the results achieved by the initiative on decent jobs for youth. The annual youth forum convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council was seen as a possible venue for intergovernmental feedback on the initiative.

65. The need for an inclusive approach was stressed, with particular attention paid to marginalized youth (e.g. orphans, the homeless, those living with HIV/AIDS and young women or girls). Encouraging entrepreneurship or self-employment and the promotion of small and medium-sized enterprises were seen as important activities to be addressed by the initiative. Job-creating engines, such as technology hubs and innovation labs or centres, were highlighted as a part of the solution for youth employment in both developed and developing countries. The need to acknowledge labour mobility and the potential for supporting regional and subregional labour markets was highlighted. Efforts to promote green and decent jobs (including in the tourism sector) and to provide related education and skills-building for youth (e.g. through the Partnership for Action on Green Economy, involving five agencies of the United Nations system in 30 countries) could also be scaled up to support countries in the transition to resource-efficient, equitable, low-carbon development pathways. It was suggested that promoting public sector employment opportunities for youth and youth volunteerism should be incorporated into the initiative. It was

also suggested that the risks of youth unemployment, which included crime and violence, should be highlighted, along with the potential costs of not addressing those challenges.

66. In several interventions the possibility was raised of piloting the initiative at the country level, especially in the least-developed countries and in fragile States that could benefit most from additional support. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East offered to facilitate a pilot/test case with the aim of applying the approach to the broader Middle East, observing that, the high literacy and education rates and good health notwithstanding, unemployment and poverty were rising among Palestinian refugees.

67. In her final remarks to the Committee, Ms. Berar Awad acknowledged the array of comments and suggestions offered by members and elaborated on points raised during the discussion. She noted some of the activities that would be undertaken by the task team as it continued to develop the proposal, including the mapping of existing partnerships and identifying how to engage them through the umbrella of the multi-stakeholder group, the identification of effective champions and the deepening of thought on thematic areas of work (e.g. green jobs and the digital economy).

68. In concluding the session, the Vice-Chair confirmed that revisions would be made to the terms of reference in the light of the comments made. They would be recirculated electronically to the Committee for approval before being presented to CEB at its first regular session of 2015. She stated that the task team, including any new members that wished to join, would further develop the initiative and present a draft to the Committee at its thirtieth session or, if practicable, earlier through electronic distribution, in view of the need to work swiftly and effectively to deliver on the initiative and the stated desire of the Secretary-General to demonstrate action in that area of work.

**Conclusion**

69. **The Committee approved the terms of reference of the task team on the global initiative on decent jobs for youth, as set out in annex III to the present report, subject to the incorporation of comments made during the session, for endorsement by CEB at its first regular session of 2015.**

## VI. Agenda item 5: summary of information items

70. Before the current session, the Committee had received, via electronic mail, the information notes described below for its review and endorsement on a non-objection basis. No objection had been received. The Committee was thus invited to take note of the reports, which provided updates on progress achieved since its twenty-eighth session.

### A. Climate change

71. The information note prepared by the Committee Working Group on Climate Change provided an overview of the status of implementation of the work programme of the Working Group for the period 2014-2015.

### B. Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020

72. The information note prepared by the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States outlined the efforts under way in the preparation of a set of proposals relating to a system-wide implementation of the Programme of Action.

### C. UN-Water, UN-Energy and UN-Oceans

73. Information notes prepared by UN-Water, UN-Energy and UN-Oceans offered progress updates on the recent activities of the three inter-agency coordination bodies.

**Conclusion**

74. **The Committee took note of the information notes and expressed thanks to the organizations for their updates.**

## VII. Agenda item 6: dates and venue of the thirtieth session of the Committee

75. Members had been informed of the Chair's proposal to hold the thirtieth session of the Committee at United Nations Headquarters on 12 and 13 October 2015.

**Conclusion**

76. **The Committee confirmed that its thirtieth session would be held on 12 and 13 October 2015 at United Nations Headquarters.**

# Annex I

## Agenda

1. Urbanization and sustainable development.
2. Inequality, human rights and the post-2015 development agenda.
3. Data revolution.
4. Youth employment.
5. Summary of information items:
   (a) Climate change;
   (b) Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020;
   (c) UN-Water, UN-Energy and UN-Oceans.
6. Dates and venue of the thirtieth session of the Committee.

# Annex II

## List of participants

Chair: Achim Steiner (United Nations Environment Programme)

Vice-Chair: Jane Stewart (International Labour Organization)

Secretary: Kayoko Gotoh

**United Nations**

| | |
|---|---|
| Executive Office of the Secretary-General | Paul Akiwumi |
| Department of Economic and Social Affairs | Thomas Gass |
| | Navid Hanif |
| Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs | Gwi-Yeop Son |
| | Marion Biermans |
| Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights | Craig Mokhiber |
| | Sally-Anne Way |
| Regional commissions | Amr Nour |
| International Labour Organization | Azita Berar-Awad |
| | André Bogui |
| | Ana Teresa Romero |
| | Casper Edmonds |
| | Rafael Diez de Medina |
| Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations | Sharon Brennen-Haylock |
| | Raquel Santos Garcia |
| United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization | Ana Luiza Thompson-Flores |
| | Jean-Yves Le Saux |
| World Health Organization | Shambhu Acharya |
| | Ivana Milovanovic |
| World Bank Group | Dominique Bichara |
| International Monetary Fund | Axel Bertuch-Samuels |
| International Telecommunication Union | Mario Castro Grande |
| | Susan Teltscher |
| | Susan Schorr |

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|---|---|
| World Meteorological Organization | Elena Manaenkova |
| | Christian Blondin |
| International Maritime Organization | Jesper Loldrup |
| World Intellectual Property Organization | Naresh Prasad |
| | Joe Bradley |
| | Enayet Mowla |
| | Victor Owade |
| International Fund for Agricultural Development | Luis Jiménez-McInnis |
| United Nations Industrial Development Organization | Sarwar Hobohm |
| | Kazuki Kitaoka |
| International Atomic Energy Agency | Margit Bruck-Friedrich |
| World Trade Organization | Said El Achimi |
| World Tourism Organization | Marcio Favilla |
| | Zoritsa Urosevic |
| United Nations Conference on Trade and Development | Adnan Issa |
| | Anida Yupari |
| United Nations Development Programme | Magdy Martinez-Soliman |
| | Paul Ladd |
| United Nations Environment Programme | Corli Pretorius |
| | Maaike Jansen |
| | Claudia ten Have |
| Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees | Arafat Jamal |
| | Annika Sjoberg |
| | Tarek Abou Shanab |
| United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East | Robert Hurt |
| United Nations Children's Fund | Marilena Viviani |
| United Nations Population Fund | Farah Usmani |
| World Food Programme | Arif Husain |
| United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime | Gillian Murray |

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|---|---|
| United Nations Human Settlements Programme | Naison Mutizwa-Mangiza |
| | Yamina Djacta |
| United Nations System Staff College | Maria Hutchinson |
| | Patrick van Weerelt |
| Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS | Monique Middelhoff |
| Office of the Envoy of the Secretary-General on Youth | Saskia Schellekens |
| CEB secretariat | Simona Petrova |
| | Remo Lalli |
| | Ken Herman |
| | Cheryl Stafford |

# Annex III

## Time-bound task team on the global initiative on decent jobs for youth

## Terms of reference

### A. Scope and objectives

1. In October 2014, at its twenty-eighth session, the High-level Committee on Programmes discussed decent jobs for youth, along with the urban agenda, as an issue deserving the priority attention of the Committee and selected it as a prototype platform for applying the five key elements of the post-2015 agenda identified by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) and supporting "fit-for purpose" efforts by mobilizing the capacity of the United Nations system and operationalizing the establishment of issue-based partnerships.

2. The task team is a time-bound inter-agency mechanism under the Committee. It is established to develop a global initiative on decent jobs for youth and to support the Committee in responding to issues of strategic concern to the United Nations system.

3. The issue-based initiative on decent jobs for youth will aim to foster system-wide cooperation; strengthen policy coherence and coordination; mobilize and engage external partners; and enhance linkages between normative and operational aspects of United Nations efforts in the service of improved programming and delivery.

4. Over recent years, there have been several inter-agency undertakings on youth employment, at both the international and national levels, including through the development of a United Nations system-wide action plan on youth by the United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development and joint programming and implementation of youth employment interventions by United Nations country teams. The initiative will build on those interventions and capitalize on existing platforms, lessons learned, good practices and tools, with a view to expanding action in response to the youth employment challenge, in particular at the country level. More specifically, the initiative will aim:

(a) To use the convening authority of United Nations agencies to engage stakeholders and decision makers to shape policies, implementation and funding to ensure action on youth employment at both the global and country levels;

(b) To scale up context-specific action at the country level for systematic and coherent operations of the United Nations and other stakeholders on youth employment and for additional financial and human resources;

(c) To improve knowledge development and sharing of what works for youth employment, including tools and strategies, within and beyond the United Nations system.

A pillar on mobilization of resources, including the establishment of a funding facility, could be considered under the initiative.

5. The initiative will also serve as:

(a) A platform to share information, tools, strategies, knowledge and lessons learned;

(b) A forum to practically apply the five elements of the post-2015 development agenda and mobilize and deploy collective United Nations capacity;

(c) A prototype of an issue-based multi-stakeholder partnership.

6. The task team will focus the initiative on promoting decent jobs and investing in youth as a key part of efforts to pursue longer-term sustainable development and will ensure that the initiative:

(a) Adopts a multidimensional and multisectoral approach for expanding opportunities for decent jobs for young people;

(b) Is grounded in rights-based and normative frameworks of the United Nations;

(c) Prioritizes young women in targeting approaches and mainstreams gender equality commitments and practices, ensuring that both young men and women can benefit from investments in their employability and entrepreneurship;

(d) Recognizes the heterogeneity of youth and the need to promote targeted approaches;

(e) Addresses supply-side and demand-side measures (e.g. by stimulating labour demand, skills for employability, targeted labour market interventions, self-employment and entrepreneurship);

(f) Focuses on the quality, quantity and types of jobs and entrepreneurship opportunities for youth;

(g) Promotes access to enabling factors such as productive resources (including land), finance, and technology for youth;

(h) Pays specific attention to linking social protection initiatives that increase investment in education and skills for youth and transition to work initiatives;

(i) Combines immediate action with long-term policy interventions;

(j) Pursues active engagement of and partnerships with the private sector and complementarity and coherence between public policies and private sector investment in promoting decent jobs for youth;

(k) Facilitates the involvement of young people in relevant policy and planning discussions by pursuing active engagement with youth organizations in both rural and urban areas;

(l) Emphasizes impact at the country level and pursues regional perspectives where appropriate;

(m) Builds on existing networks and platforms;

(n) Expands multi-stakeholder partnerships.

7. To develop the strategy the task team will:

(a) Analyse the issue, including by:

(i) Mapping innovative and creative work in the area of youth employment in both rural and urban contexts;

(ii) Identifying gaps to be filled by the initiative;

(iii) Reviewing the priority assigned to youth employment in United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks and in the work of United Nations country teams;

(b) Submit a proposal with recommendations based on the above-mentioned analysis, for a global initiative on decent jobs for youth to the the Committee for approval and for consideration and endorsement by CEB.

## B. Modalities of work

8. The task team is chaired by the International Labour Organization. Its core members are the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Telecommunication Union, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the World Tourism Organization, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the United Nations Environment Programme, the World Bank Group and (ex officio) the Office of the Envoy of the Secretary-General on Youth. Participation in the task team is open to all members of the Committee.

9. Participation in the work of the task team is encouraged to be at the level of the individuals who represent their organizations on the Committee (normally the level of Director or above), with the support of technical staff.

10. In developing the initiative, the task team will consult and solicit input from representatives of United Nations country teams, representatives of the world of work, the main international youth organizations and other actors engaged in the development and implementation of youth employment interventions.

## C. Main deliverables and timeline

11. Terms of reference to be immediately prepared, reviewed by the task team and submitted for approval to the Committee at its twenty-ninth session, in March 2015, and for subsequent consideration by CEB at its first regular session of 2015.

12. Between January and April 2015, the task team will map innovative and creative work relating to the objectives outlined above and identify possible external partners.

13. The task team will produce a background paper on key elements of the draft strategy for discussion by the Committee at its meeting in March 2015.

14. Subsequent to the Committee meeting, a retreat of the task team will be convened to develop the proposed strategy further.

15. A revised and expanded version of the strategy will be completed by the end of July 2015.

16. The proposal on the initiative will be submitted for consideration by the Committee at its thirtieth session, in October 2015, and for subsequent endorsement by CEB at its second regular session of 2015.

17. The work of the task team will be completed by the end of 2015, once the initiative is launched by December 2015, assuming that the Committee and CEB approve it at their session in the third quarter of 2015.